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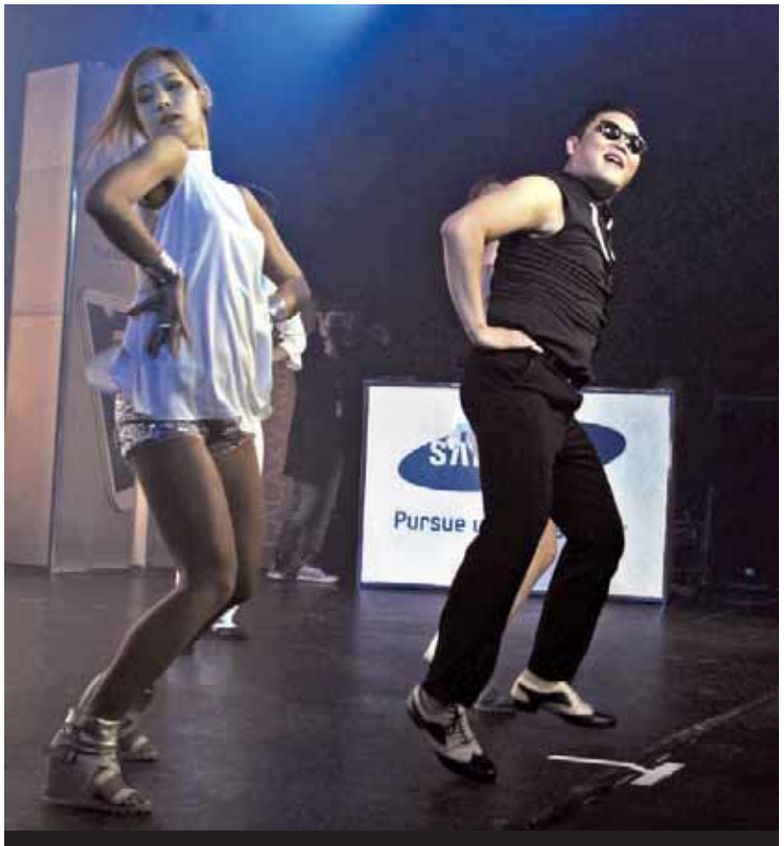

PSY-BY-NIGHT STYLE

Korean pop superstar Psy made his debut Canadian appearance at Kool Haus Tuesday night with a performance worthy of his Gangnam Style reputation. The show was presented by Samsung Canada to support the launch of the Galaxy Note II. See story, page 4. SAUL PORTO/TOP NEWS

T.O. crime down, except assaults in the city's core

Police data. While Toronto crime continued to decline last year, police statistics show a consistent number of assaults in the Entertainment District

While Toronto crime continued to decline last year, police statistics show assaults remain consistently high in downtown neighbourhoods, with the Bay Street corridor topping the list.

The 2004-2011 data obtained by Torstar News Service shows a steady gradual decline in crime overall.

Vehicle theft declined by 60 per cent, breaking and entering by 37 per cent and theft over $5,000 by 39 per cent.

"The overall trends are essentially what we've been seeing from those reports," said University of Toronto criminologist Rosemary Gartner. "Generally crimes have been dropping since the early to mid-'90s."

Murders and vehicle theft dropped by about 20 per cent between 2010 and 2011.

Toronto police spokesman Mark Pugash warned the data isn't as complete as it could be.

"It's very hard simply on the basis of numbers to come to detailed conclusions," he said. "You have to look into crime trends, crime analysis — you have to look at composition of the area. Those numbers don't do that."

The data provides information in eight categories: Assault, breaking and entering, drug charges, murder, robbery, sexual assault, auto theft and theft over $5,000. The data is broken down by Toronto's 140 neighbourhoods.

"It's not surprising that the Bay Street corridor and the Entertainment District have relatively high rates. When they're calculating rates, what they do is base it on the residential population," said Gartner. "What that doesn't take into account is the actual flow of population through the area over time." TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Surveying the devastation

Even the dead weren't safe from Superstorm Sandy, as you can see in our roundup of destruction left in the storm's wake PAGES 3, 6-9

His name is Jonas and he's ready to go

Young centre Valanciunas set to guard Pacers all-star in tonight's season opener PAGE 33

Promenades and paella

Historic Spanish city of Valencia offers atmospheric architecture, flavourful local dishes and Mediterranean beaches PAGES 28-29

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Councillors vote themselves Halloween treat

Toronto city councillors voted themselves a treat first thing Tuesday: They're leaving early for Halloween.

But like every vote at city hall, the debate was heated and council was divided.

When Coun. Karen Stintz first pitched the motion to break at 2 p.m., a furious David Shiner called it "completely inappropriate" unless council was prepared to let the thousands of city staff off too.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Open Easter Sunday

Eaton Centre bucks tradition

One of Toronto's largest malls is breaking with tradition and swinging open its doors for the Easter Sunday holiday.

Toronto Eaton Centre says it will be open for five hours on the holiday starting next March since shoppers tend to take a secular view of formal religious holidays.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Mount Dennis

Man shot dead

A man in his mid-20s has died after being shot in broad daylight near a Mount Dennis apartment, Toronto EMS officials said.

Police say the shooting took place on the corner of Denarda Street and Weston Road around 4:20 p.m. Paramedics found a man in his 20s with a gunshot wound to his upper body. He was rushed to a trauma centre and pronounced dead within an hour. Police are going through video surveillance for more information. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

A 100-year-old Red Oak fell into Barry Wadman's home on Neville Park in the Beach. Sandy also caused blackouts and many fallen trees. RENE JOHNSTON/TORONTO STAR

Sandy left mess for morning commuters

Superstorm. Toronto faced power outages, TTC problems and school closures

The GTA spent Tuesday cleaning up after Superstorm Sandy's high winds and heavy rains sent trees tumbling over power lines and branches flying into homes.

As of 5 p.m. Tuesday, 9,000 Toronto Hydro customers were without power across the city, including homes in the Beach, Scarborough and near York University. Some may not have power back until as late as Thursday afternoon as the utility focuses on the largest outages first, Toronto Hydro said.

The agency, which restored power to 85 per cent of affected customers, says it would try to reach remaining homes Tuesday night through secondary lines, which only power a handful of homes each.

At the storm's peak at 4 a.m., as many as 60,000 customers didn't have electricity. Scarborough, Upper Beaches, East York, Leaside and the Junction were hit hardest.

Toronto Hydro estimates most outages were caused by fallen trees hitting power lines, costing around $1 million. It noted that the rest of the GTA has less tree density and suffered fewer power outages.

Unlike transit operations in New York City, the TTC avoided any infrastructure damage or flooding, spokesman Brad Ross said.

While most schools opened as normal and buses ran, power outages closed about 15 Toronto District School Board schools and one Toronto Catholic District School Board school on Tuesday. All schools should be open Wednesday, except for Rippleton Public School and St. Bonaventure Catholic School in North York, along with Keele Street Public School. In each case, board officials will assess whether to hold classes.

Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport re-opened at noon Tuesday, while Pearson International Airport spokesman Scott Armstrong said a quarter of scheduled flights were cancelled Tuesday. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

City response

- **311 service.** City of Toronto spokeswoman Wynna Brown said the 311 service received 3,177 calls during 12 hours for things like cleaning up fallen tree branches and fixing traffic signals. The normal call volume for a similar 12-hour time period is 260 to 340 calls.
- **Fire crews.** Superstorm Sandy also kept Toronto Fire crews very busy. Capt. David Eckerman said they responded to 569 calls Tuesday, compared to 229 calls on an average day two days ago.

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Toronto fans all 'sighs' for Korean pop star's first Canadian show

Psy-ched. K-pop superstar vows to return to Toronto in the new year

JESSICA SMITH
jessica.smith@metronews.ca

Psy — the Korean pop superstar with a global influence that would make the United Nations jealous — made his Canadian debut at the Kool Haus in Toronto Tuesday.

"How many Koreans in the house tonight?" he asked the crowd.

Psy got a deafening roar in response. He played three songs that night: Champion, Right Now and the super hit Gangnam Style

Before launching into his international crossover phenomenon song, Psy spat water at the audience, joking that American's just spray water on their fans.

"Excuse us, this is the traditional Korean way, it's not gross or nasty," he said to loud cheers.

After sweating up the stage and singing his heart out, Psy promised to return to Toronto to play a show in January.

Fans lined up for hours and danced Psy's idiosyncratic horse dance in a competition to get a VIP pass and an autograph.

Phantasma Levesque, 18 years old and dressed like Psy in tux and shades, was one of the talented five who danced their way to being chosen for a backstage pass.

"I've been practising the dance a lot," she said, a little at a loss for words after winning.

Rapper Greg Hong, the first in line, said it's Psy's passion that connects with fans.

"When I see his music it's like he really fell in love with the music," he said. "Because of his love and enthusiasm, I think that's what his fans are looking for — and why his video hit 600 million views just now," he said.

Gangnam Style is currently the third-most viewed video on YouTube — although still with only half the hits of Justin Bieber's song Baby.

Psy's rabid popularity made United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki Moon joke last week he's now the second-most famous Korean in the world, and wonder aloud what the UN could do with Psy's "global reach."

Marketing matters

Psy's reach isn't a joke to the marketers at Samsung, who organized the concert to launch their "next big" phone, the Galaxy Note II.

- "We're looking at the popularity of Psy online and thinking this makes a lot of sense for us, for an international company to reach out to someone with an international appeal," said Ken Price, director of marketing for Samsung mobile.
- "It's touching for me, because Samsung and I come from the same country," Psy said at the concert.

Psy fans were totally charged by the Korean pop superstar's performance at the Kool Haus Tuesday night, their cheers becoming a deafening roar during all three songs that Psy pumped his way through. After sweating up the stage and singing his heart out, Psy promised to return to Toronto to play a show in January. SAUL PORTO/TOP NEWS

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Blaze destroys Roots store on Queen St.

Firefighters were dousing minor flare-ups as late as 2 a.m. Tuesday in a three-alarm fire at this Roots store on Queen Street West. METRO

No injuries. Fire officials say no one was injured and no one was found during an initial search of the building

More than 80 firefighters battled a three-alarm blaze that destroyed a commercial building on Queen Street West early Tuesday morning.

At 12:42 a.m., flames shot out of a three-storey building at 369 Queen St. W. near Spadina Avenue, which houses a couple of apartments and a Roots store. Within four minutes, the fire spread and was upgraded to a three-alarm alert.

Fire crews sprayed streams of water onto the building for 40 minutes until the fire was extinguished around 1:30 a.m. They were dousing minor flare-ups as late as 2 a.m.

The fire caused the building's roof to cave in and its second floor to collapse, leaving the front dangerously bowing by one foot, according to Toronto fire Capt. David Eckerman.

Before the blaze broke out, Eckerman said neighbours reported hearing explosions from inside the building. Though it's unclear what caused the fire, Eckerman ruled out strong winds from Superstorm Sandy as the sole reason.

"There might be some electrical problem that was made worse by the weather, but you can't blame it just on the weather regardless," he said.

Eckerman added that the storm required firefighters to bring extra equipment and ensure the strong winds didn't blow embers onto adjacent buildings.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Closing chapter

McGuinty extends olive branch to labour unions

Expressing regret for his government's heavy-handed tack toward teachers' unions, Premier Dalton McGuinty wants to help his successor by making peace with labour unions before retiring in January.

"I will admit it's ... regrettable, but nothing is beyond repair. I'm convinced we can restore good relations and goodwill with our public-sector partners," McGuinty said.

In his first newspaper interview since his resignation Oct. 15, the premier spoke at length about a tumultuous year that has seen the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation turn on the governing Liberals after years of support. The premier also shared his plans for some dramatic changes to the province's school curriculum that would encourage students to be more creative, innovative, and entrepreneurial — even though he's mindful such an initiative may be viewed cynically by some.

Outraged at having a two-year wage freeze forced upon them by legislation last month, education unions have encouraged teachers to curb voluntary extracurricular activities and rallied by the thousands at Queen's Park.

That has made for a difficult closing chapter for the self-styled "education premier," whose government has increased teachers' salaries by 25 per cent since taking office in 2003, built dozens of new schools, reduced class sizes, improved test scores, and raised graduation rates. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

High school. Drake gives graduation speech to crowd of screaming graduates

Drake thrills the grads at Jarvis Collegiate with his congratulations speech. GETTY

A recent grad himself, rapper Drake stole the spotlight at a Toronto high school graduation Friday when he offered his congratulations to the graduates of Jarvis Collegiate Institute.

"What this is about today, for all of you, is about the art of following through," Drake told the crowd of screaming graduates.

Drake dropped out of his Forest Hill high school when he scored a starring role on Degrassi: The Next Generation. Although his character, Jimmy, fictionally graduated in 2009 (allowing Drake to pursue a career on stage), the actor-cum-rapper said it took years before he realized he wanted to complete high school.

"There was a void, a gap in my life that I need to fill. And it was the fact that I had left a gaping hole in my story of following through," Drake said.

So, for five months, Drake sought the help of a tutor from Jarvis Collegiate Institute. Through email correspondence, the rapper studied regularly and wrote exams while touring across the world. His hard work paid off — he announced on Twitter that he'd scored 97 per cent on his final exam.

Drake dedicated the diploma to his mother, a retired teacher, who he said had always wanted him to graduate.

"I think I'll sleep a little better tonight knowing that I found a way to follow through," he said. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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‘It is a devastating sight right now’

Tough road ahead.
Sandy will end up causing about $20B in property damage and $10B-$30B more in lost business: Global Insight

The most destructive storm in decades to hit the most densely populated U.S. region cut off modern communication and left millions without power Tuesday, as thousands who fled their waterlogged homes wondered when — if — life would return to normal.

A weakening Sandy, the hurricane turned fearsome superstorm, killed at least 50 people, many hit by falling trees, and still wasn’t finished. It inched inland across Pennsylvania, ready to bank toward western New York state to dump more of its water and likely cause more havoc Tuesday night.

“Nature,” said New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg, assessing the damage to his city, “is an awful lot more powerful than we are.”

More than 8.2 million households were without power in 17 states as far west as Michigan.

One of the most dramatic tales came from lower Manhattan, where a failed backup generator forced New York University’s Tisch Hospital to relocate more than 200 patients, including 20 babies from neonatal intensive care. Dozens of ambulances lined up in the rainy night and the tiny patients were gingerly moved out, some attached to battery-powered respirators as gusts of wind blew their blankets.

Sandy killed 18 people in New York City, the mayor said. The dead included two who drowned in a home and one who was in bed when a tree fell on an apartment. A 23-year-old woman died after stepping into a puddle near a live electrical wire.

What damage could be seen on the coastline Tuesday was, in some locations, staggering. “Unthinkable,” New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie said of what unfolded along the Jersey Shore, where houses were swept from their foundations and amusement park rides were washed into the ocean.

“It is beyond anything I thought I’d ever see. It is a devastating sight right now.”

Images from around the storm-affected areas depicted scenes reminiscent of big-budget disaster movies. In Atlantic City, a gaping hole remained where once a stretch of boardwalk sat by the sea. In Queens, rubble from a fire that destroyed as many as 100 houses in an evacuated beachfront neighbourhood jutted into the air at ugly angles against a grey sky. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Witness

“Everybody knew it was coming. Unfortunately, it was everything they said it was.”

Sal Novello, a construction executive, who rode out the storm with his wife, Lori, in the Long Island town of Lindenhurst, and ended up with 2.1 metres of water in the basement

Is climate change to blame?

For more than a dozen years, climate scientists have been warning about the risk for big storms and serious flooding in New York.

- But they say it’s unfair to blame climate change for Sandy and its destruction.
- “The ingredients of this storm seem a little bit cooked by climate change, but the overall storm is difficult to attribute to global warming,” Canada’s University of Victoria climate scientist Andrew Weaver said.

Brian Hajeski, 41, reacts as he looks at debris of a home that washed up onto

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- Study starts on Wednesday November 28, 2012
- 4 sessions with 3 returns per session.
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the Mantoloking Bridge on Tuesday, the morning after Superstorm Sandy rolled through Mantoloking, N.J. JULIO CORTEZ/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Great Lakes, great tragedy. Ships halted as sinking of Fitzgerald remembered

Cargo shipping on the Great Lakes is at a standstill as crews have taken refuge from waves up to six metres high churned up by Superstorm Sandy.

Freighters as long as 300 metres haul loads of iron ore, coal and other bulk commodities on the lakes. Most if not all have taken refuge in harbours or bays to escape the storm's wrath.

Glen Nekvasil of the Lake Carriers' Association said Tuesday he wasn't aware of ships moving anywhere on the lakes. His Cleveland-based organization represents U.S.-flagged vessels. Robert Lewis-Manning of the Canadian Shipowners Association says everything's come to a halt in Canadian waters as well.

Bad weather has caused many shipwrecks on the lakes, including the legendary ore carrier Edmund Fitzgerald that sank in a monster 1975 Lake Superior storm.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Winds from Superstorm Sandy cause high waves to crash over the North Pier and into the St. Joseph Lighthouse in Saint Joseph, Mich., on Tuesday.

SOUTH BEND TRIBUNE/ROBERT FRANKLIN/THE ASSOCIATE PRESS

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After the storm, is Obama winning perception game?

U.S. President Barack Obama speaks at the Red Cross headquarters in Washington, D.C., on Tuesday about ongoing relief in the wake of Superstorm Sandy CHRIS KLEPONIS/GETTY IMAGES

Presidential race.
Romney holds event in Ohio, but his team claims it's not a campaign rally

With Americans watching closely, political experts say President Barack Obama must appear presidential, authoritative, non-political and in command of the Superstorm Sandy relief efforts.

Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney, on the other hand, has to temper his criticism of the president, avoid the appearance he's trying to score political points and ease up on high-profile campaigning.

The White House announced Tuesday Obama would suspend his campaign for a third day Wednesday, and would instead travel to New Jersey to survey the devastation with Gov. Chris Christie — a top Romney surrogate who nonetheless heaped praise upon the president earlier in the day.

Romney, meanwhile — after saying a day earlier he was suspending his campaign to focus on helping the victims in Sandy's path — was back out on the trail the day after the storm wreaked its worst havoc. He held an event in a critical swing state that wasn't particularly punished by Sandy: Ohio.

Romney was dogged with questions from the reporters covering his campaign about whether he'd abolish the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), which he suggested he'd do during a primary-season debate last year. The appearance had many of the outward signs of a campaign event, although supporters were asked to bring non-perishable food and supplies for Sandy victims.

One analyst said Obama appeared to be winning the perception game.

"Obama has more of an opportunity here than Romney, simply because he's the president and he can order FEMA around, he can issue executive orders," William Benoit, a professor of communications studies at Ohio University, said Tuesday.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Terminal attitude change.
Airlines seem to be learning from past weather mistakes

Sandy has left more than 16,000 flight cancellations in its wake.

Chaos at airports? Hardly.

Not long ago, a powerful storm pounding the northeast U.S. would have brought havoc to some of the nation's busiest airports: families sleeping on the floor amid mounds of luggage; passengers stuck for hours on planes hoping to take off; and dinners cobbled together from near-empty vending machines.

In the aftermath of Sandy, airports from Washington to Boston are deserted. There are hundreds of thousands of travellers stranded across the U.S. and around the world, but instead of camping out inside airport terminals they are staying with friends and family or in hotels.

After years of storm mismanagement and the bad public relations that followed, U.S. airlines have rewritten their severe-weather playbooks. They've learned that it's best to cancel flights early and keep the public away from airports, even if that means they'll have a bigger backlog to deal with once conditions improve.

This allows the airlines to tell gate agents, baggage handlers and flight crews to stay home, too — keeping them fresh once they're needed again. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A look at Delta Airlines' departure screen on Monday in Detroit.
CHARLIE RIEDEL/THE ASSOCIATES PRESS

Sea rescue

Captain's wife holding out hope

The U.S. Coast Guard used ships and airplanes to search the Atlantic on Tuesday for the captain of the sunken HMS Bounty as the sailor's wife held on to a sliver of hope that he had survived the harrowing ordeal. The Coast Guard was optimistic Robin Walbridge, 63, of St. Petersburg, Fla., could still be alive in his blazing red survival suit 144 kilometres off the North Carolina coast.

Walbridge went overboard early Monday when the Canadian-built replica 18th-century sailing vessel rolled over in five-metre waves. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Save-the-ducks attempt

Quack thinking

A U.S. woman faces charges including reckless endangerment, disorderly conduct and public drunkenness after she jumped into a raging Pennsylvania creek to "save" a couple dozen wild ducks from the superstorm, and her toddler started to follow her. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Transportation halted

ETA on subway fix still unknown

The floodwaters that poured into New York's deepest subway tunnels may pose the biggest obstacle to the city's recovery. Corrosive salt water could have destroyed essential switches, lights, turnstiles and the power-conducting third rail. Several tunnels that carry trains beneath the East River remained flooded Tuesday. The head of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority said it was too early to tell how long it would take to pump them dry and make repairs. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

'Tasteless' comment

Tweet so not PC

President's Choice has apologized for an "insensitive" tweet about Hurricane Sandy that has left many Canadians with a bad taste.

The private label of Loblaw, posted Tuesday: "What's scarier? Hurricane #Sandy or a beverage with marshmallow eyeballs?" THE CANADIAN PRESS

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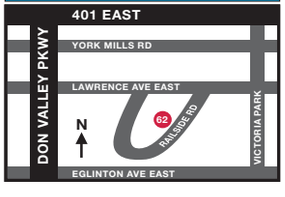

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Why was serial killer moved to a 'softer' jail?

Gripping question at inquest. Prison official believed he was making a 'sincere effort' to reform, but he killed again

Lela Phillips, mother of murdered Jeremy Phillips, walks outside Coroner's Court in Burnaby, B.C., on Tuesday. JONATHAN HAYWARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Federal corrections officers who assessed a violent serial killer before transferring him to a medium-security prison believed the convict was repentant, a B.C. coroner's inquest heard Tuesday.

Just two months after the transfer, Michael McGray confessed to killing his cellmate — a seventh murder.

An assistant warden at Mountain Institute in Agassiz, B.C., described to the coroner's jury the rationale for moving McGray.

"He indicated he was committed to his correctional plan ... he was performing very well," Brenda Lamm told the inquest. "I believe he was making a sincere effort."

McGray confessed to police he tied up 33-year-old Jeremy Phillips with bedsheets and stuffed a sock in the willing man's mouth as part of an elaborate hostage-taking ruse. And he promised to stack up more bodies before he dies.

The inquest is looking into the safety of inmates.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Images criticized

New passports no ticket to ride?

Images Passport Canada is putting on new passports are getting negative reviews from focus groups.

The 16 images, unveiled last week, show moments from Canadian history, such as the Last Spike, the Fathers of Confederation in Charlottetown, and the Bluenose racing schooner.

But focus groups said the pictures unfairly exclude women and multicultural communities.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Welcome? Our hearts may be hardening toward migrants, survey shows

An internal government survey suggests there has been a slight hardening of Canadian hearts toward the country's immigrants.

An analysis of the 2012 Citizenship and Immigration tracking survey suggests that the number of respondents who said they believe immigration has a positive effect on the economy was down 10 percentage points from 2010.

The results come as Immigration Minister Jason Kenney prepares to release the government's targets for the number of immigrants Canada will accept next year.

The 2012 survey of 2,700 people was carried out in February.

Among other things, it found that most Canadians think the level of immigration is just right, though fewer respondents agreed with that statement once informed of the actual number.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Blast from the past: Dud bomb shuts airport

Jitters in Japan.
All 92 flights in and out of Sendai are cancelled after wartime relic is unearthed on runway

A major airport in northern Japan was closed Tuesday after construction workers found an unexploded bomb believed to be from the Second World War.

All 92 flights in and out of Sendai airport were cancelled after the 250-kilogram bomb was uncovered during construction near a runway.

The bomb was identified as American-made and is believed to be a dud from the war.

It appeared to have a working detonator, and a military bomb squad was considering whether to move the bomb or explode it on the spot. Sandbags were piled up around the bomb. Officials said nearby homes might be evacuated.

Sendai airport, a regional hub for travel into northern Japan, was closed for months due to severe damage from last year's tsunami. It is still undergoing reconstruction. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A bulletin board at Sendai airport in Japan tells the story: All flights cancelled. The reason — an unexploded wartime bomb.
KYODO NEWS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Deadly rain

The United States heavily bombed Japanese cities during the Second World War and finding unexploded bombs is not unusual, even 67 years after Japan's surrender.

- **Tokyo tally.** Dozens of duds are uncovered in Tokyo every year.

Fed-up French PM orders sexism lessons for ministers

Politicians in France — which produced feminist icons such as Joan of Arc and Simone de Beauvoir — are going back to school.

They'll study … sexism.

French Prime Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault ordered the training after a series of gaffes by his ministers.

All of France's 38 ministers have signed up or are in the process of registering.

In the interest of gender equality, the female ministers are going, too.

Organizer Caroline de Haas says 80 per cent of politicians interviewed on French TV and radio broadcasts are men. She wants to fight against the "illusion" that France "has almost achieved equality."

Behind Ayrault's order are a series of missteps that sparked outrage.

There were catcalls in the French Parliament just because a female government minister wore a floral dress.

And this month the agriculture minister — in an interview on promoting gender equality — suggested that women couldn't get their heads around technical jobs. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sweden's role

The anti-sexism training initiative comes — rather unsurprisingly — from Sweden, which is top-rated for gender equality.

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Flu-shot maker says it's working to clear vaccines

Affected lot. Novartis says it hasn't seen the problem in other batches produced at its Italian facility

Canada has asked flu-shot maker Novartis to suspend distribution of its influenza vaccine in Canada. JEFF MCINTOSH/THE CANADIAN PRESS

A senior executive with the pharmaceutical giant Novartis says the company is working around the clock to provide countries with the information they need to release flu vaccines currently being withheld from distribution.

Canada and a number of countries have suspended use of two types of Novartis flu vaccines in the past week after Italian authorities ordered the company to stop distribution of the products in Italy. The two brands of flu vaccine are made at Novartis's production facility in Italy; they are sold under the names Agriflu and Fluad in Canada.

The Italian action came after Novartis informed the regulator that it had found protein aggregates in one batch of vaccine.

Dr. Vas Narasimhan, the global head of vaccines development for Novartis Vaccines and Diagnostics, says potency and safety testing Novartis conducted on all batches of Fluad and Agriflu showed all of the lots met safety and potency specifications. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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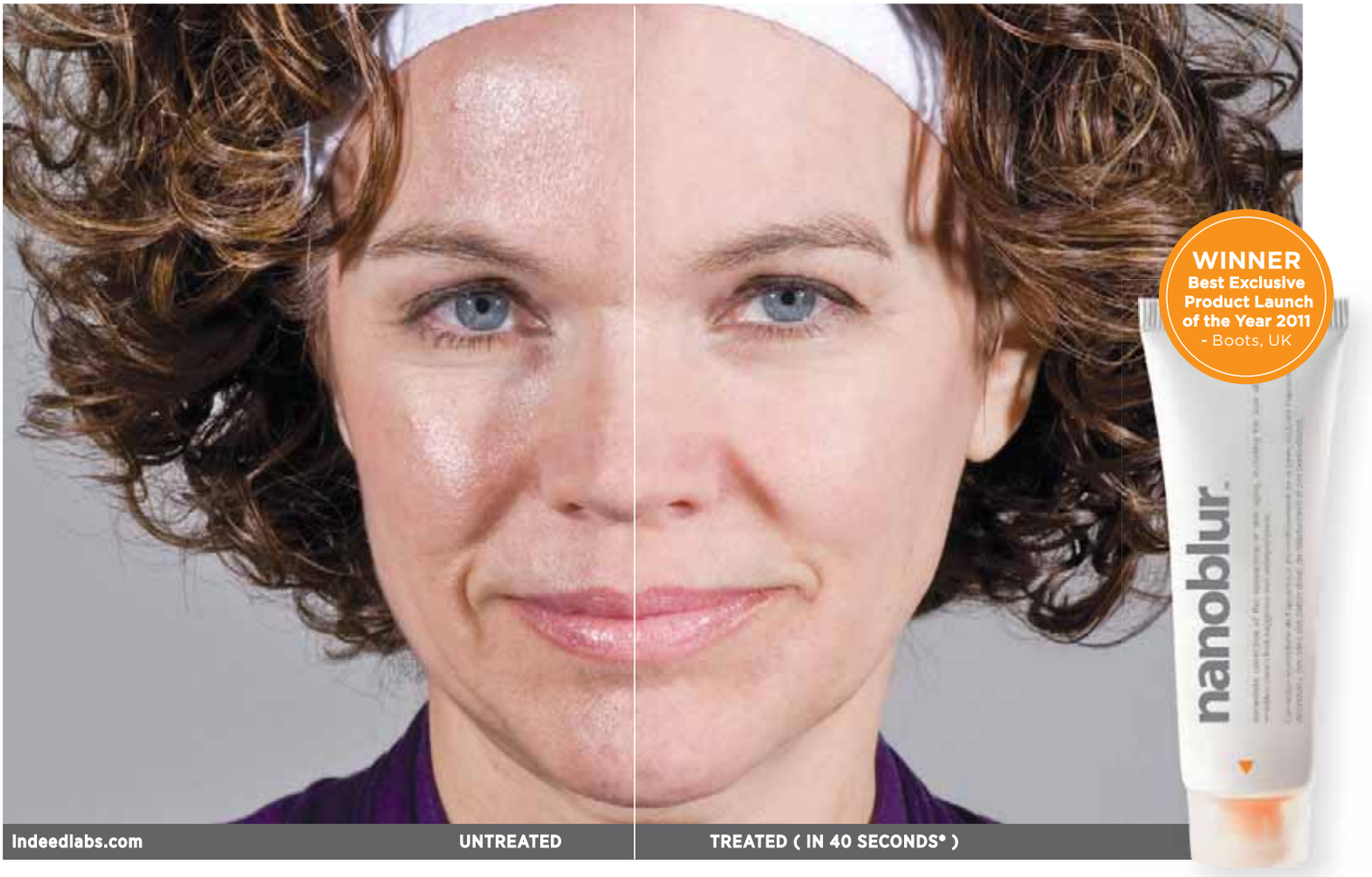

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Paranormal activity

Feel like a Halloween scare? We take a look at the spookiest places in some Metro cities across Canada. For more cities and extended stories, visit metronews.ca

Edmonton

The McKay Avenue School is Edmonton's oldest brick schoolhouse, and it is reportedly haunted by a construction worker who fell from the roof while building an addition in 1912.

Regina

Tales of moving chairs and the sounds of footsteps are just regular occurrences at Government House. The 100-year-old residence has been used for everything from spectacular royal parties to an infirmary for Second World War veterans, and is said to be haunted by a former cook.

Toronto

Fort York was the site of a bloody battle back in 1813 and today, there have been many sightings of slain soldiers wandering the fort.

Halifax

The Five Fisherman Restaurant is known for its great food and ambience, but some swear its building from the 1800s is home to ghosts. Staff stories include glasses flying off shelves with no one around and cutlery on tables moving then falling to the floor. There is even the story of a server being patted on the shoulder, only to turn around and see no one there.

Calgary

Popular downtown watering hole the Rose and Crown was formerly a funeral home. The pub is believed to be home to multiple ghosts, including a young boy who reportedly died there.

Saskatoon

The Nutana Cemetery was where the first settlers of Saskatoon buried their loved ones, with the first recorded burial happening in 1884. It is said that on cold, dark nights, you can hear children crying.

Ottawa

A spectral presence in a hotel room and eerie singing in a winding staircase prompt history buffs to explore the spooky tale of the owner of the Chateau Laurier, who perished on the Titanic.

Vancouver

Benedictine monks, a fake archbishop who hid a criminal past and several orphaned children are said to haunt the grounds of Ceperley House and the James Cowan Theatre in Burnaby, B.C.

Winnipeg

The Manitoba Museum has many artifacts from different time periods — and rumoured spirits attached to those artifacts, drawing the attention of paranormal researchers.

London

Eldon House is one of London's oldest homes and is said to be haunted by Wenman Wynniatt, who died on his way to meet his love there. Legend has it he returned from the afterlife immediately after his sudden death to say goodbye to his lady.

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Europe.
Dutch 'pot pass' plan blown into the weeds

The incoming Dutch government has ditched plans for a national "weed pass" that would have been available only to residents and that would have effectively banned tourists from Amsterdam's marijuana cafes.

However, under a provisional governing pact unveiled this week, cities can bar foreigners from weed shops if they choose.

The pact says that it wants only Dutch residents to have access to marijuana cafes, but leaves enforcement up to cities. Amsterdam opposes a ban, which would hurt tourism.

Some cafe owners said Tuesday that they are satisfied Dutch marijuana policy will remain unchanged, while others criticized the lack of clarity.

Marijuana trafficking is technically illegal in the Netherlands, but people can't be prosecuted for possession of small amounts and the drug is sold openly in designated "coffee shops." **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Steve Jobs' superyacht like floating Apple store

Completed in the Netherlands. Apple founder's polished metal and glass creation launched just over a year after his death

Workers in the Netherlands put the finishing touches on Venus, the superyacht commissioned by Steve Jobs.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The sleek, white superyacht glistens under a grey autumnal sky, a posthumous testament to the design esthetic of Steve Jobs.

Just over a year after the Apple founder died, the luxury motor yacht he commissioned and helped French product designer Philippe Starck make has finally slipped into an anonymous Dutch backwater.

Looking like a floating Apple store, it bears all the hallmarks of a new Jobs-inspired creation — crisp white lines, polished metal, glass. And secrecy.

Late Tuesday, shipbuilder Feadship announced it had launched the "78.2-meter (256-foot) all-aluminum, full custom motoryacht Venus" at its yard in Aalsmeer, just south of Amsterdam, on Sunday.

The superyacht has a long white hull with a row of circular portholes just above the water line and two glass-walled cabins on the top deck, one on top of the other.

Starck said Jobs asked him to design a boat in 2007 and approved his design at only their second meeting to discuss the project.

"The project never changed during the process of five years dedicated to a rigorous work on details, driven by the famous eye and genius of Steve Jobs," the statement issued by Starck's design house said.

Jobs biographer Walter Isaacson wrote that Jobs, who long battled pancreatic cancer, was conscious of the fact that he may never see the finished yacht, but wanted it completed anyway.

"I know that it's possible I will die and leave Laurene with a half built boat," he said, referring to his wife. "But I have to keep going on it. If I don't, it's an admission that I'm about to die." **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Wildlife.
B.C. park gains rare bear

A rare, white kermode bear with a hankering for human contact will spend the rest of its life in a Kamloops, B.C., wildlife park.

The 18-month-old cub, which carries the rare genetic trait that turns its fur creamy white, was found orphaned in northern British Columbia.

Conservation officers decided the young male bear was not a good candidate for relocation, and it was sent to the wildlife park, becoming what's believed to be the first kermode bear in captivity. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

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Avoiding Common Insurance Mistakes

Costly errors that affect insurance rates.

The cost of car insurance is a major expense for most people, and rising rates often seem unavoidable. But an increase in your premium is not always something you can't avoid. Often, simple errors lead to over-paying for insurance. These eight mistakes are the quickest way to see higher premiums.

Earning a traffic ticket. Tickets are one of the most common reasons that insurance rates go up. Many different traffic violations can be responsible for an increase. Speeding, running right lights and careless driving are all violations that result in insurance rates that are higher. It takes three years before the ticket is removed from your driving record.

Not shopping for rates before you buy a new car. People often find themselves shocked by the cost of insurance on their new car, but there's a way to avoid that. Every car comes with a different insurance rating, and some are pricier than others to insure. When you're considering options, get car insurance quotes on each possibility before you make a buying decision.

Failure to shop around at regular intervals. Many people avoid it because they believe it's a hassle, or think they can't get a better rate. This is one expensive mistake. People who take the time to shop around almost always pay less; and with internet quoting sites like InsuranceHotline.com, it's easier than ever.

Failing to take advantage of multi-policy discounts. What do your home, life, and auto insurance have to do with each other? Well, if you insure them all in the same place, it could be quite a lot – of savings that is. Most insurance companies offer a multi-policy discount. If you don't have all of your policies in the same place, you could be missing out on some big savings on all of your policies.

Remember that the very best way to keep your insurance premiums low is to be a safe

driver and shop around for better rates. Insurance quoting sites like InsuranceHotline.com can help by comparing your insurance rate against over 30 car insurance companies to find you a lower rate available for your driving profile.

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Not the blogs! Flooding takes out HuffPo, Gawker

Data centres down.
Superstorm Sandy shuts Internet facilities in downtown Manhattan, affecting popular sites

Flooded data centres in downtown Manhattan brought down Gawker, Huffington Post and many popular New York-based blogs Tuesday while phone and cable companies were scrambling to assess damage and restore service in the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy.

News and gossip site Gawker.com was still down in the afternoon, but Huffington Post was back online. Their webhost, Datagram Inc. said power was out, and flooding in their basement was preventing their backup generators from pumping fuel. Internet connectivity from three providers was also down.

Verizon Communications Inc., the biggest phone company in the region, said some facilities in downtown Manhattan are flooded, shutting down phone and Internet service.

Renesys Corp., which monitors the pathways of the Internet, said the storm caused major outages in New Jersey and New York. The city is a major transit point for international telecommunications traffic, and the firm said carriers were scrambling to route traffic around it.

Cablevision Systems Corp., which serves parts of Long Island, New York City and New Jersey, says it experienced widespread outages due to the loss of power. The company said it doesn't yet know the extent of outages in New Jersey, which bore the brunt of the storm. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Stock exchange closed for second day

The streets surrounding the New York Stock Exchange are deserted Tuesday as financial markets remained closed for the second day due to Superstorm Sandy. Trading has rarely stopped for weather. A blizzard led to a late start and an early close on Jan. 8, 1996, according to the exchange's parent company, NYSE Euronext. The NYSE shut down on Sept. 27, 1985 for Hurricane Gloria. The exchange is expected to reopen Wednesday for regular trading.

RICHARD DREW/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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French beer tax proves hard to swallow

New legislation in France would raise taxes on beer to help fund struggling social programs. GETTY IMAGES FILE

160% increase. EU brewers' organization calls new legislation a 'kick in the teeth'

France, the land of wine, is planning heavy taxes on beer, and that is not going down well with brewers — even in other nations.

President Francois Hollande is pushing through legislation to increase taxes on beer by 160 per cent to help fund struggling social programs as France tries to contain a budget deficit hit hard by the economic crisis.

The tax would affect local brews and the 30 per cent of imported beer the French drink. The change means the price of a beer will increase by about 20 per cent in bars and supermarkets, said Jacqueline Lariven, spokeswoman for the French brewer's federation Brasseurs de France.

The Brewers of Europe trade group called the measure a "kick in the teeth" on Tuesday, especially since brewers have seen beer production plummet by six per cent and consumption by eight per cent in the EU since the region's economic crisis began in 2008.

Quoted

"This measure will affect all brewers, including small entrepreneurs. This is a very shortsighted approach by penalizing one sector."

Pierre-Olivier Bergeron, head of the Brewers of Europe

Outside France, Belgium and Germany would be worst affected once the new legislation kicks in, said Pierre-Olivier Bergeron, head of the Brewers of Europe.

France, like most other European Union nations, is doing all it can to keep its budget on an even keel, and President Hollande has been using taxation to raise income. His government said it hopes to raise some 480 million euros (about $622 million) from the increase in beer taxation to boost social benefits such as medical insurance and elderly care.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

XL Foods.
U.S. cattle producers' group wants sale blocked

Some American cattle producers want the U.S. government to block the possible sale of a troubled Alberta company's beef operations.

The Ranchers-Cattlemen's Action Legal Fund says it is concerned about JBS USA's option to purchase XL Foods Inc. plant in Brooks, Alta., two U.S. slaughtering plants and other properties.

Bill Bullard, CEO of R-CALF, has written a letter to the U.S. Justice Department saying if the deal goes through it would make JBS USA a dominant player in the beef industry.

"It is a significant acquisition and it would catapult JBS perhaps into being the largest beef packer in the United States if the acquisition were to go through," Bullard said Tuesday from Billings, Mont.

"We will do everything within our power and means to block this merger."

In the letter, Bullard asks the department to investigate how the deal would affect U.S. cattle producers and consumers and to block it if it would lead to further consolidation of the beef market.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sacrificing for the Land Transfer Tax is wrong.
On average, Toronto home buyers have to pay about $15,000 in City Hall and provincial Land Transfer Taxes, upfront, every time they move.
For many people, that's not easy. It can mean stretching their budget thin with higher mortgage costs, or putting off needed spending like home repairs, renovations, appliances and furniture. That's not right.
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London.
Trader says he was told to 'push boundaries'

A former UBS trader accused of losing $2.3 billion US in reckless deals told a jury Tuesday that he lost control amid constant pressure from his managers to make profits.

Kweku Adoboli, 32, testified to a London court that managers at the bank were fully aware of what he was doing and pressured him to "push the boundaries" when he worked at the Swiss bank.

"We were told you wouldn't know where the limit of the boundary was until you got a slap on the back of the wrist," he told the Southwark Crown Court. "We found that boundary, we found the edge, we fell off and I got arrested."

The former trader denies two counts of fraud and four counts of false accounting between October 2008 and September 2011.

Adoboli said he felt pressured to take a more bullish approach to trading when a fellow trader mocked his conservative stance in an email that was circulated within the company. He said he did not feel he had full control of the trades under the pressure.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Calgary

TransCanada plants survive Sandy's wrath

TransCanada says its power generating operations in the northeastern U.S. made it through Superstorm Sandy in good shape. The firm's president of energy and oil pipelines says the Ravenswood Power Plant in New York City churned out electricity throughout Monday night and Tuesday.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ottawa

Federal spending cuts shutter culture organization

A cultural group founded by artists including Group of Seven member Lawren Harris is suspending operations after 67 years, a victim of federal spending cuts. The Canadian Conference of the Arts, the largest national alliance of the arts, culture and heritage sector, says it will start winding down its work. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Maps app

Apple asks iPhone software exec to resign

The head of Apple's iPhone software development was asked to resign after he refused to sign a letter apologizing for the flaws in Apple's mapping application, according to a published report.

The Wall Street Journal says Scott Forstall's refusal was the latest clash between him and other executives, and it led to the company's announcement Monday that he is stepping down and leaving the company next year. Forstall's unit was responsible for the Maps application, which was unfavourably compared to the Google Maps app it replaced. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Scott Forstall, senior VP of iPhone software AP FILE

Canada-China deal

Petition calls for feds to reject investment treaty

Opposition parties and activists are ramping up their campaign against the Canada-China investment deal in the hopes of stalling the agreement. Activist groups are handing MPs a petition with more than 60,000 signatures calling on the federal government to reject the investment treaty. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Market Minute

DOLLAR 100.07¢ (+0.15¢)

TSX 12,377.05 (+64.30)

OIL $85.68 US (+$0.14)

GOLD $1,712.10 US (+$3.40)

Natural gas: $3.70 (-10 ¢)
Dow Jones: Closed due to storm

WHAT'S GIVING YOU GOOSEBUMPS THIS HALLOWEEN

JUST SAYIN'
Paul Sullivan
metronews.ca

Happy Halloween, the scariest day of the year. And if you think it's all fake blood, makeup and masks, this list of the Seven Scariest Things Happening Right Now will wipe that silly zombie grin off your face.

1 **Mother nature gone wild.** Earthquakes and tsunamis on the West Coast; Perfect Storm Sandy on the East Coast. Why has Gaia gone gaga? Is it something we did?

2 **Death by Mitt-adventure.** Mitt Romney must figure he's suffering from some Halloween curse. At the very moment it looks as if his U.S. presidential campaign is poised to take off, he is foiled by an Act of God that elevates Barack Obama, his opponent. It doesn't help that he was caught on camera during the Republican primary, saying it was "immoral" to borrow money for disaster relief. It's bad enough that the New York Times has endorsed Obama, but God? Geez, Louise.

3 **...and 39 minutes later.** Not sure if it was immoral or not, but the U.S. response to the 7.7-magnitude earthquake off Haida Gwaii Saturday night was 39 minutes faster than the B.C. government's. The quake happened at 8:04 p.m.; the U.S. sent out a tsunami warning at 8:16. The B.C. government followed with a tsunami tweet at 8:55, long after everyone should have gone to higher ground. B.C. Premier Christy Clark was happy with her province's response. Nobody died, she said cheerfully. This time.

4 **Equal time for the undead.** Tony Bennett makes another album of duets with people who can still sing, play instruments and stand upright. For a man who recorded his first album in 1952, a hearty pat on the back … and two words of advice: Enough, already.

5 **Speaking of creepy.** Then there's Anne Coulter. If Tony Bennett should step aside for Michael Bublé or something, Anne Coulter should be subject to a restraining order. The scariest blond on the block calls the president of the United States a "retard" in her outside voice, and refuses to take it back or apologize, no matter how many Special Olympians she has offended.

6 **Lost in cyberspace.** The head of Apple's iPhone software development loses his head over the iPhone 5 Maps application that directs people into the Twilight Zone more often than Google Maps, which it unwisely replaces. Almost simultaneously (or at least posthumously) the 260-foot yacht of deceased Apple founder Steve Jobs is launched. I hope it's using Google Maps to navigate.

7 **Most Haunted — NOT!** The annual list of most haunted places in Canada is doing the rounds again this year, and the usual suspects — the Banff Springs Hotel, Fort Henry in Kingston, Ont., and Gastown's Blood Alley — are on the list. But Canada's Scariest Place didn't even make the list: Where's Toronto City Hall? Rob Ford is comin' to git ya.

Hopefully Mitt Romney isn't compromising his moral beliefs here, where he helps at a storm relief event in Kettering, Ohio, on Tuesday. GETTY IMAGES

Endangered moth larva a scary sight

LUI WEBER/REX FEATURES

Animal behaviour

Larva of moth is fit for Halloween

If prizes for Halloween costumes were handed out in the natural world, this scary skull-faced creepy-crawly would surely win.

This extraordinary specimen is the larva of the pink underwing moth (Phyllodes imperialis), an endangered species only found in the Australian rainforest. METRO

Photographer's viewpoint

"Sadly this moth is very rare. I only know of a single adult seen last year, so I do not have photographs of the adult yet. This southern subspecies is listed as nationally endangered in Australia."

Botanist/ecologist and photographer Lui Weber explains

Habitat

Photographer keeps finding more

All but one of the habitat locations are in south-eastern Queensland, but Lui says more discoveries are being made.

"It was only known to breed in a single location in upland rainforest. But this year I have discovered another three locations and a colleague has located one additional site, making five locations in total," Lui says. METRO

Conservation efforts

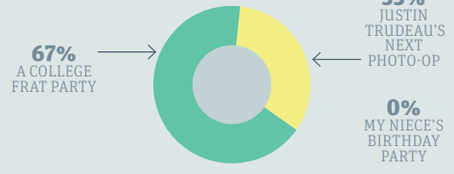
Moth currently looking for a home

The Australian government has placed the caterpillar on its endangered list. "Potential breeding habitat is restricted to areas where the caterpillar's food plant, a native rainforest vine, occurs in subtropical rainforest," the government said. "Adult pink underwing moths require the darkness supplied by the vine to breed." METRO

Metropolitan Panel

Register at metropolitanpanel.ca and take the quick poll

After appearing in an Ottawa couple's wedding photos, what event should Stephen Harper photobomb next?



Twitter

@DrWhoSociety:
This isn't Doctor Who related, but in a show of geek solidarity we fear what may come of this: Disney Buys LucasFilm!

@swimstein:
Personally I'm waiting for a Star Wars-Avengers-Muppet Babies crossover. #disney #lucasfilm

@4llison:
I don't see why anyone is upset about Disney acquiring Lucasfilm... Lucas already ruined Star Wars more than anyone else ever could.

@rob_kempson:
Still no power, but it should be on soon. After an evacuation last night, I'm really impressed with Toronto Hydro. #cleanup #sandyTO

@I_LuvTO2:
Cllrs shouldn't be able to discuss city business behind closed doors. Didn't Rob Ford campaign on that? #BrokenPromise #TOpoli

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Walt Disney Company President and CEO Bob Iger, left, Star Wars creator George Lucas and actor Anthony Daniels attend the grand opening ceremonies for Star Tours — The Adventures Continue at Disney's Hollywood Studios theme park. DAVID ROARK/GETTY IMAGES

LucasFilm flies into new era

Walt Disney. The Star Wars franchise, built from the ground up by George Lucas, sold for death-star-size sum of $4.05 billion

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News

The Walt Disney Company has purchased LucasFilm — which was behind the colossal Star Wars franchise — for $4.05 billion, the company announced Tuesday.

In addition, Disney announced that a new Star Wars film — rumoured to be Episode 7, which would follow Return of the Jedi chronologically — will be released in 2015.

That film will be just the beginning, as a Disney insider tells Metro that the new film "will be followed by Episodes 8 and 9, and our long term plan is to release a new Star Wars feature film every two to three years."

He added that the company believes "there's substantial pent-up demand" for more Star Wars films.

"For the past 35 years, one of my greatest pleasures has been to see Star Wars passed from one generation to the next," franchise creator George Lucas said in a statement. "It's now time for me to pass Star Wars on to a new generation of filmmakers."

LucasFilm co-chair Kathleen Kennedy will become president of LucasFilm, while Lucas will serve as a creative consultant for any new films. Disney purchased Marvel Entertainment three years ago for an almost identical sum.

Celeb tweets

Here is what some of the celebrity fans are saying about the switch.

- **Patton Oswalt (@pattonoswalt).** Not saying Twitter's in a nerd frenzy about the Disney/Lucasfilm STAR WARS VII news, but I tried to post earlier & got my arm ripped off.
- **Paul Scheer (@paulscheer).** I just got so excited when I heard they were making a Star Wars VII then I remembered the last three.
- **Harry Knowles (@headgeek666).** Busy running a mini-army to get ready for Halloween. But, this STAR WARS/LUCASFILM/DISNEY thing — it's what I as a fan have dreamt of. YES!
- **Han Solo (@hansolo).** I'm mostly just excited for Star Wars theme parks.

The blood-splattered Great White North

Thrills and chills.
The Canadian horror genre has a healthy collection of classics that have influenced the U.S. industry

IN FOCUS
Richard Crouse
scene@metronews.ca

Olivia Hussey starred in Black Christmas. HANDOUT

There's plenty to be afraid of in Canada — and no, I don't mean Quebec's mythical werewolf, the loup-garou or Dalton McGuinty's proroguing of the legislature. We may be known as a mild mannered people, but put us in front of a camera and all of a sudden we turn into creepy Canucks.

The Great White North has a blood splattered cinematic tradition, dating back to The Mask, the first Canadian film widely distributed in the United States.

A low budget 3D thriller about an archaeologist who believes he is cursed by a mask that causes him to have weird nightmares and even murder people, the movie was a cheapie knocked out to cash in on the 3D craze started by movies like House of Wax. Although it missed that movement by a few years, it may have inadvertently started a new trend. Since the release of The Mask, which coupled tried-and-true 3D with experimental electronic music to heighten its spooky effect, Canadian filmmakers have been scaring the toques off their countrymen and women.

Where would Canadian horror movies be without Valentine's Day? In 1981, My Bloody Valentine, a creepy little slasher flick shot in Cape Breton, ran afoul of the ratings board but has since gone on to become a cult classic.

In 2008, a new type of terror reared its ugly head on the day Hallmark created. In Bruce MacDonald's Pontypool, the townsfolk of a small Ontario town are infected by a deadly virus on Valentine's Day — A God bug that turns them into flesh-eating zombies. Not even Cupid with a quiver full of arrows can keep this town safe.

Jack Brooks: Monster Slayer, an Ottawa-shot chiller, has cult hit written all over it. Breathing the same fetid air as genre classics Dead Alive and Demons, it has all the earmarks of a midnight movie in the making — humour, a tormented anti-hero, crazy creatures, gallons of guts and goo crowned by an over-the-top performance from horror legend Robert "Freddy Krueger" Englund.

No look at Can Con chills would be complete without at least one David Cronenberg movie. The Brood stars Oliver Reed, Samantha Eggar and Black Christmas (another great Canadian horror) star Art Hindle in a story about a brood of mutant children. Writer Ken Hanke called it one of the director's most "unsettling" films, which is really saying something if you've seen Rabid, Shivers or Videodrome.

Quoted

"The Great White North has a blood splattered cinematic tradition, dating back to The Mask, the first Canadian film widely distributed in the United States."

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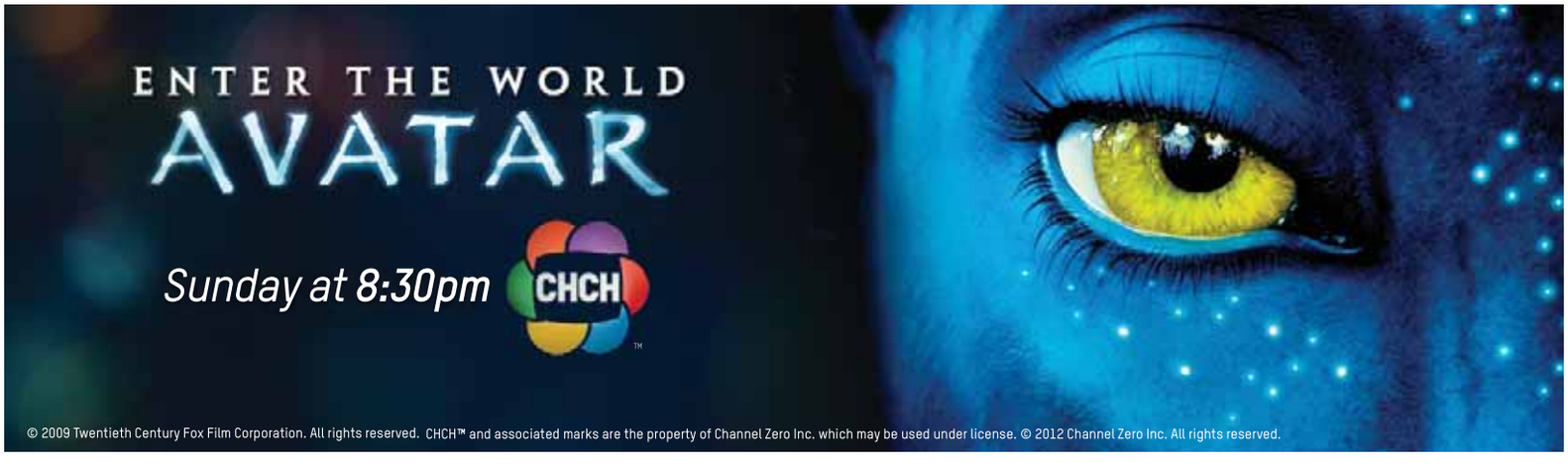
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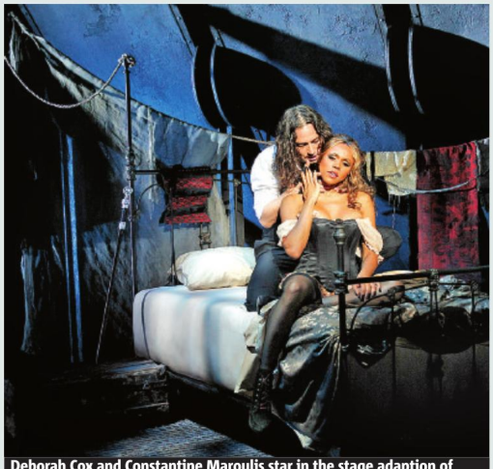
See Hyde's musical side


Deborah Cox and Constantine Maroulis star in the stage adaption of Jekyll and Hyde. HANDOUT

What do you get when you take a local songstress (Deborah Cox) and couple her with a Tony award nominated baritone (Constantine Maroulis)? The national touring revival of the Broadway musical sensation: Jekyll and Hyde, which is coming to Toronto in November.

Based on classic Robert Louis Stevenson novel: the Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, the musical adaptation: Jekyll and Hyde, premiered on Broadway in 1997.

The original material was a Victorian exploration of morality and similarly the musical tells the fictional horror story of a London doctor (Maroulis) who unleashes an evil alternate personality in his attempt to cure his father's mental illness. Further tension is driven by a love triangle, while Dr. Jekyll is engaged to be married.

Jekyll and Hyde will be on stage in Toronto for one week only — Nov. 14 to 18 at the Ed Mirvish Theatre.

Tickets are available via Mirvish.com.

Don't be an evil Mr. Hyde — get yours before they sell out.

And for those circus lovers out there — Cirque Éloize, a fairly new Quebecois circus troupe, will be performing their latest circus: iD, at the Sony Centre. iD was a huge hit with Toronto audiences last fall and we're excited for its triumphant return. Sceneopolis subscribers receive 20 per cent off tickets to iD.

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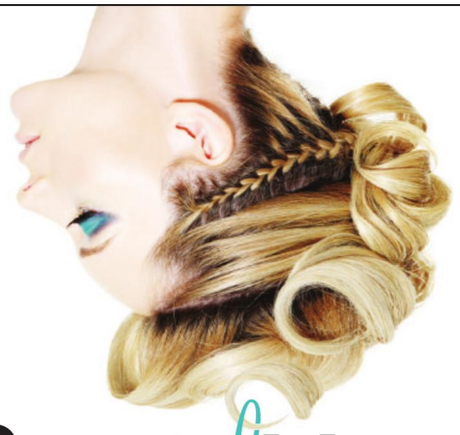

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ADVENTURES ON THE SLOPES

FERNIE ALPINE RESORT/HENRY GEORGI PHOTO

B.C.'s deep powder, high alpine vistas and multitude of terrain options, from easy to challenging, make the province a magnet for adventure seekers.

"The stunning mountain vistas when you're at the peak — there's nothing like being up there," says David Lynn, president of the Canada West Ski Areas Association.

There are 46 alpine and Nordic areas in B.C. from which to choose. B.C. resorts have trails that run the gamut from easygoing for beginners, to a fun challenge for intermediate skiers, to thrillingly steep terrain for advanced skiers and snowboarders.

While every resort has a range of difficulty levels, some resorts, including Revelstoke, Whitewater and Kicking Horse, are known for their advanced terrain, which attracts adventure-seeking visitors from across Canada and beyond, Lynn says.

Snowcat and heli-skiing adventures are available through many of the resorts. Experienced guides take skiers off-resort to slopes of pristine powder deep in the wilderness. It's the experience of a lifetime, according to Lynn.

For adventure seekers with kids, B.C. resorts offer fun ski and snowboard lessons and snow camps where children from toddlers to teenagers can learn to be skilled rippers. And while the kids are at camp, parents can take off for some challenging skiing.

But you don't have to be an advanced skier to take advantage of the thrills of the hill. B.C.'s ski resorts hold adult lessons for every level of skier and snowboarder. It's a fantastic Christmas gift opportunity for someone who has always wanted to try out snow sports, Lynn says.

B.C. resorts also have many high-quality cross-country skiing and snowshoeing trails, so if visitors still have energy after a day of downhill, they can switch up the pace, day or night (many trails are lit). "The resorts really have a variety of outdoor activities," Lynn says. "Visitors can take full advantage of the outdoor mountain experience."

About a third of visitors to B.C.'s ski resorts are international destination skiers, and B.C.'s ski spots have hosted world-class events all the way up to the Olympic Games and World Cup.

"It's a testament to the consistency and quality of our snow, the massive variety of terrain and our fun, welcoming resorts," Lynn says.

Learn more about the B.C. ski experience at SkiItToBelieveIt.com.

CARVE YOUR WAY DOWN THE 'POWDER HIGHWAY'

Tucked near Nelson, B.C., along the "Powder Highway," there's a small ski resort with a whole lot of personality. Whitewater is an adventure escape for locals and international skiers in the know.

Devoted powder hunters love the world-class Kootenay powder snow that blankets Whitewater's slopes at an average of 40 feet per year, says Anne Pigeon, general manager of indoor operations and marketing at Whitewater.

"The Whitewater experience is pure, simple, real, and the snow is deep," she says.

Three chairlifts, plus 13 cross-country ski trails and 10 kilometres of snowshoe trails offer visitors a range of options for a multi-day trip.

That's not to mention the snowcat and heli-ski tours that take visitors off the beaten track in search of deep powder and steep slopes in the Selkirk Mountain range. At a base elevation of 1,626 metres, Whitewater is a prime jumping-off point for a variety of expert-led adventures.

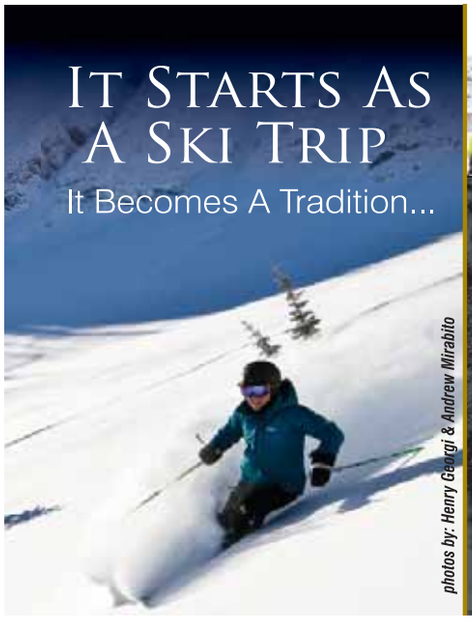
"We're able to offer some of the best lift-access backcountry on the planet," Pigeon says.

To make sure adventurers remain safe and prepared, Whitewater offers avalanche awareness courses and skills training, as well as free beacon training to help visitors learn to conduct beacon searches with transceivers.

Whitewater offers a variety of affordable ski vacation packages, with combinations of lift tickets, backcountry snowcat skiing, accommodations and access to blissful hot springs a short trip away.

The nearby town of Nelson offers accommodations from hostels to first-class hotels, and Whitewater offers many vacation ski-and-stay packages at a range of prices.

Learn more at skiwhitewater.com.



photos by: Henry Georgi & Andrew Mirabito

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ROBIN SIGGERS PHOTO

FRESH AIR, STEEP DROPS, SPECTACULAR VIEWS

Skiing or snowboarding in B.C. is an essential Canadian experience that everyone should try at least once, according to Matt Mosteller, vice-president of sales and marketing at Resorts of the Canadian Rockies.

"You've got all the elements of adventure here — the fresh air, the deep powder, the steep drops, the spectacular views," Mosteller says.

KICKING HORSE MOUNTAIN RESORT

Kicking Horse, whose trademark is the "Champagne Powder Capital of Canada," is a destination resort nestled between the Purcell and Rocky Mountain ranges near Golden, B.C., which offers some of the most progressive in-bounds skiing in North America. The mountain has 1,260 metres of vertical and the resort is expanding to provide new groomed trails with options for skiers of all levels.

KIMBERLEY ALPINE RESORT

Situated in the Selkirk and Rocky Mountains, Kimberley has the sunniest skiing in the province. Kimberley has something for everyone with more than 80 runs from which to choose. Adventurers can dive into the Easter Bowl on the mountain's back side and experience non-stop fall lines and some heart-stopping steeps.

FERNIE ALPINE RESORT

Fernie is a local favourite, offering 1,011 hectares of skiing spread across five bowls. Known for steep and deep conditions, Fernie delivers the full skiing and snowboarding experience. In 2011, Fernie opened the Polar Peak chairlift, giving the ski resort an added 1,082 vertical metres of terrain with more than 22 new runs.

ALWAYS SOMETHING NEW AT WHISTLER BLACKCOMB

Whistler Blackcomb is a world-class ski resort not just because of its sheer size (the two mountains combined have more than 200 trails, 37 lifts, five parks and 3,307 hectares of total terrain), but because of the resort's tremendous efforts to create an unparalleled ski and snowboard experience for everyone, says Stuart Rempel, Whistler Blackcomb's senior vice-president of sales and marketing.

"We have an ever-growing list of new routes and innovative programs," he says. "Every year there's something new."

Starting Dec. 8, the resort is working with Extremely Canadian, Whistler Blackcomb's Steep Skiing Clinic founders, to run backcountry and slackcountry clinics for immediate-advanced skiers and riders.

For guests who would prefer to explore on the beaten track, Whistler Blackcomb has developed six Wonder Routes, a network of tours, trails, waypoints and stops that were created to help guests navigate the mountain and discover Whistler Blackcomb's most wonder-filled spaces. Each of the routes showcases something special about the mountains.

The Top of the World Route features views from Whistler Blackcomb's highest four peaks. The Powder Stashes Route guides guests through powder snow areas. And on the Steeps Sampler, visitors can ski some of the steepest runs on both mountains.

Learn more about Whistler Blackcomb's Wonder Routes at whistlerblackcomb.com/wonder. Whistler Blackcomb officially opens for the season Nov. 22.

WHISTLER BLACKCOMB/PAUL MORRISON PHOTO

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METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

Lance Bass not bothered over Timberlake wedding snub

Lance Bass doesn't harbor any hard feelings toward Justin Timberlake for not getting invited to Timberlake's recent lavish wedding in Italy.

"No one was invited to Justin's wedding. None of *NSYNC were invited," Bass tells Hollyscoop. "They had a small group of people. We did an engagement party for him, but nothing since then."

Bass must not have read the reports from Us Weekly last week that *NSYNC members JC Chasez and Chris Kirkpatrick did in fact score invites.

But Bass and Timberlake seem to agree on one thing: "I highly doubt that we will ever have a reunion," Bass says.

"I mean, never say never. But it won't be any time soon."

METRO WORLD NEWS

Theron, Hardy butting heads on set

Tensions are reportedly running high on the set of the Mad Max remake — and it's all due to Tom Hardy's method acting, which is driving co-star Charlize Theron crazy, according to Radar Online.

"Charlize and Tom are just not getting on together," a source says.

"In between takes Tom likes to stay in character and is constantly talking to himself and mumbling things. Charlize has tried to talk to him during breaks in filming, but he shuts himself off from the rest of the cast." The source adds that Theron thinks Harding is "a weirdo."

Twitter

@Joan_Rivers
Thinking of everyone in NY and on the east coast. Stay safe! I'm stuck in LA and unable to appear live on @QVC. This truly NEVER happens...

@AlbertBrooks
The news seems so happy when the storm is worse and sad when it isn't.

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I hearby resign from public life. Okay, I'm back!

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Half Moon Golf Club is located just beyond the craggy coastline of Montego Bay. HANDOUT

The sun is shining — the golf course is sweet

Tee time. The Jamaican Open offers a laid-back chance for amateurs to hit the links with the pros

BRIAN KENDALL
canadiangolftraveller.com

A favourite stop of royalty and high society, Montego Bay's posh Half Moon, A Rock Resort, hosts both amateurs and pros in a prestigious and fun annual championship dating from 1953.

Teeing off under the swaying palms alongside Jim Thorpe, Olin Browne, Russ Cochrane and other golf stars in the Jamaica Open is a fantasy come true for amateur golfers.

Just as much fun is the beachside après-golf parties with new celebrity friends at the resort, which is the host and sponsor of the national championship.

Played Nov. 28 to Dec. 1, the tourney is open to both professionals and amateurs who carry a maximum handicap of 5.0.

Far more democratic is the one-day pro-am preceding the main event, which accepts entries from teams of three golfers of varying abilities (provided each golfer carries an official handicap) for the entry fee of $600 (all prices in U.S. dollars).

Perhaps as big a draw as the Jamaica Open's purse of $85,000 is the opportunity for golfers to luxuriate for a few days at a Caribbean resort whose guest list has included the Queen and John and Jacqueline Kennedy, who enjoyed a month-long vacation here just prior to his inauguration as U.S. president in 1961.

Half Moon takes its name from the property's famous crescent-shaped beach of pure white sand, which in 1954 inspired investors to turn an abandoned sugar plantation into one of the world's elite resorts.

Located near bustling Montego Bay on Jamaica's northwest coast, Half Moon, which has been lavishly renovated over the past decade, sprawls across 400 acres of some of the most dramatically beautiful terrain in the Caribbean.

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- **Online.** Follow Brian Kendall on twitter @cdngolftraveler and visit his website, canadiangolftraveller.com

Accommodations include rooms and suites, as well as 33 elegantly accessorized four-to-seven-bedroom private villas, each with a pool and full-time staff.

Furnished throughout with Queen-Anne-inspired pieces and vibrant Jamaican paintings, Half Moon retains the feel of a traditional island plantation, yet with all the modern amenities.

There are 54 swimming pools, 13 floodlit tennis courts, the award-winning Fern Tree spa, one of the Caribbean's best-equipped equestrian centres and a protected lagoon where guests can swim with Reggae and Toni, the resident Atlantic Bluenose dolphins.

But the focus for golfers is Half Moon Golf Club, a lushly tropical Robert Trent Jones Sr. design opened in 1961 (and masterfully updated by Roger Rulewich in 2005) that flows seamlessly through gentle foothills just beyond the craggy coastline.

Entry to the Lime Jamaica Open is $650 for professionals; $500 for amateurs.

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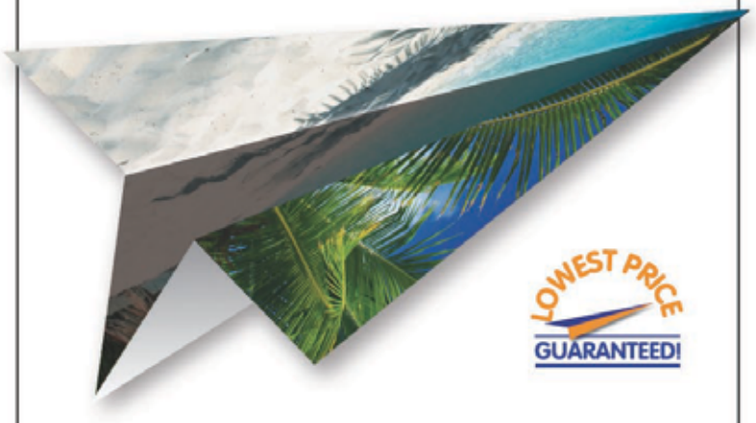

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Rio de Janeiro. THINKSTOCK

10 Memorable places to spend NYE

EMMA E FORREST
life@metronews.ca

1 Rio de Janeiro

Why? Brazil is a nation of party animals. More than two million local "Cariocas" dressed all in lucky white clothes hit Copacabana Beach, throwing offerings, including flowers, into the sea to ocean goddess Iemanja. After midnight, people hit hotels for formal New Year dinners or gather for street festivities.
Where to be at midnight: The dancing kicks off when the live samba and rock bands hit the four stages on Copacabana Beach at 8 p.m. Midnight sees a spectacular display of fireworks set off from a dozen barges moored along the coast.
Top toasting tipple: Brahma beer, champagne and caipirinha — the national cocktail made with the potent Brazilian sugar cane rum Cachaca.

2 New York City

Why? The celebrations in New York are epic, with something for everyone, from restaurants with fancy tasting menus to wild club nights, street parties and the iconic Times Square celebrations.
Where to be at midnight: More than a million revellers will hit Times Square for the 100-year-old giant ball drop tradition, when a celebrity lowers a crystal-clad ball at midnight and a ton of confetti — tiny wishes for 2013 written on official confetti by people from around the world — will be released into the square.
Top toasting tipple: No drinks are allowed in Times Square, but the rest of the city rings with the popping of champagne corks.

3 Istanbul

Why? The locals celebrate New Year's big-style here. They start with a fish supper in a restaurant, then join street parties from 11 p.m., where local bars serve drinks to revellers. The area around Taksim hosts the biggest gathering, but skip it for the cooler street parties in Nisantasi or Kadikoy.
Where to be at midnight: The sky lights up with fireworks that you can see wherever you are in the city. Stay close to the water and you'll see the explosions illuminate the staggering mosques and minarets of Sultanhamet.
Top toasting tipple: Try a glass of the national drink, Raki.

4 Berlin

Why? Berliners know how to have a good time. Join a million cheerful Berliners for the world's largest outdoors New Year's Eve party on the epic two kilometre party mile.
Where to be at midnight: At Brandenburg Gate, the New Year is marked with fireworks, lasers shows, lots of beer-drinking, and live music. Clubbers can watch an alternative fireworks display at the vast Kulturbrauerei, where 15 rooms pulse to techno, rock and house.
Top toasting tipple: Sparkling wine or mulled wine if it's cold.

Koh Phangan Island, Thailand

Why? Every year up to 30,00 hedonists from all over the world gather to dance on the beaches of this idyllic Thai island for the ultimate Full Moon party. There are parties every month when the yellow moon lights up the silvery sands, but the biggest parties are on Dec. 25 and 31. The heart of the action is at the crescent-shaped beach at Haad Rin, lined with clubs and bars blasting out different music styles.
Where to be at midnight: A massive fireworks display lights up Haad Rin beach, which is a riot of sound systems, jugglers, fluorescent body paint, glow-sticks and fire-eaters.
Top toasting tipple: Local beer, Chang, or a Thai Bucket, a sharing cocktail of Red Bull, coke and cheap rum, vodka or whiskey.

Madrid

Why? The Spaniards only get going at midnight anyway, so you're in the right place for a New Year's celebration. For Dec. 31, you also get the novelty factor of ringing the New Year in with a particularly Spanish tradition, eating a grape for every chime once the clock strikes midnight — supermarkets stock up ahead of the occasion.
Where to be at midnight: After a huge meal, the heart of the action is the Placa del Sol, where cheerful people in party hats and wigs pop their lucky grapes before reaching for the Cava.
Top toasting tipple: Spanish sparkling white Cava.

Edinburgh, Scotland

Why? Edinburgh is home to three nights of festivities, starting with a torchlight procession through the town on the Dec. 30, then street parties on New Year's Eve followed by a dive into the River Forth on Jan. 1.
Where to be at midnight: Join up to 100,000 partygoers on Princes Street to sing the world's loudest rendition of Auld Lang Syne and watch the fireworks explode above Edinburgh Castle.

Top toasting tipple: Sip a "dram" of good malt whisky or dry a local brew; Innis and Gunn make oak-aged beers in Edinburgh.

Sydney

Why? Not only is the Australian city the first major city in the world to ring in the New Year, it's the only to boast pop star Kylie as its creative director. This year, she'll be overseeing the music, theme and look of the annual festivities throughout the city.
Where to be at midnight: Join the crowds at Sydney Harbour to ooh and aah at the sensational multi-million-dollar fireworks show that lights up the city and its famous bridge and opera house. For something a little wilder, head to the Shorething party on Bondi Beach.
Top toasting tipple: Champagne or a local beer.

Tokyo

Why? New Year, or Oshougatsu, is a big celebration here that lasts until Jan. 3. Locals start by tucking into a feast with their families; osechi ryori is a special meal served in a decorated box and packed with delicacies that symbolize good luck and fortune. After midnight, it's time for hatsumode, when everyone rushes to temples and shrines to wish for good luck in the New Year.
Where to be at midnight: Join the crowds at Tokyo's elegant Meiji Shrine, where the large temple bells are rung at midnight. While the bells ring and bonfires burn, you can buy lucky charms and tasty treats from the stalls, and pin up your hopes for the new year.
Top toasting tipple: Celebrate with a bowl of Toshikoshi Soba or Year End Soba noodles, or warming sake.

London

Why? This has been a huge year for the city, with the Olympics and the Jubilee celebrations. Expect the year to end with a bang across London. Big crowds gather throughout the West End, but for a cooler crowd head east to Old Street and Dalston for quirkier parties in bars and clubs. The next day, watch the acrobats, musicians and dancers in the New Year's Day parade as it weaves from The Ritz to Parliament Square.
Where to be at midnight: The biggest crowds gather at Trafalgar Square, underneath Nelson's column, or gather along the River Thames and its bridges to watch the sensational pyrotechnics light up the iconic buildings that line it from Big Ben to the London Eye.
Top toasting tipple: Expect to hear the pop of Cava, champagne and prosecco corks throughout the city.

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New Orleans
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Holiday Inn French Quarter, Carnival Elation incl $944 base + $195 taxes & fees
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USA

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Don't forget to add Valencia to your Spanish to-do list

Hidden gem. Historic city is just beginning to hit travellers' radar with its beaches, food and signature cocktail, the agua de Valencia

VAWN HIMMELSBACH
life@metronews.ca

Once overlooked by visitors, Valencia is coming into its own, offering a growing gastronomic scene and laid-back Mediterranean vibe — and it makes an easy side-trip from Madrid or Barcelona.

This historic city has been around for more than 2,000 years and still retains elements from its Roman, Arabic and Christian rulers. Wander its narrow cobblestone streets and take in the Gothic and Baroque architecture — or hit the beach.

Valencia has seven kilometres of beaches, with plenty of eateries and drinking holes along the promenade in Las Arenas and Malvarrosa (locals say this is the best place for paella, a traditional dish made with saffron-flavoured rice).

Tapas: Bodega Casa Montana is a centuries-old tavern in the El Cabanal neighbourhood, with a well-stocked cellar featuring Spanish wines. Pass through the packed tavern and duck underneath the bar to find private rooms at the back. The menu features rustic tapas with local ingredients — the anchovies come from Santona (in season) and the sardines come straight from the boats in Castellon. Try the tavern's classic tapas, including michirones (cooked fava beans) and codfish croquettes.

Cocktails: El Café de las Horas is a charming literary café that's well worth a visit, not only for its décor — mosaic floors, glittery chandeliers and a starry ceiling — but also for its unique selection of cocktails. Try the Rose Tea Royale, made with rose tea, rose essence and Cava (the Spanish version of Champagne), along with some cold tapas.

And forget sangria! Try the local drink, agua de Valencia, which, as it turns out, is a lot stronger than agua. Here's how to make it: Combine Cava (or sparkling wine, if you can't find it at home) with vodka, triple sec and a splash of orange juice.

Paella: Thirty per cent of the rice produced in Spain comes from the surrounding Albufera Nature Reserve and town of Sueca. Try the promenade or the village of El Palmar to taste the Valencian version of paella; Restaurante La Lola offers a variety of gourmet versions. Look for Valencian rice in delicatessens and markets to take home (you'll pay about 2.50 euros for a sac, compared to about $15 in Canada — if you can find it).

Wine: The region has close to 18,000 hectares of vineyards, producing red, rosé and white wines from about 80 different wineries. Try Mistela, a local favourite made from the Moscatel grape, which has a sweet taste. Bodegas Gandia is one of the largest wine-makers here and offers tours around its Hoya de Cadenas winery.

Where to stay: The former Palace of the Marquis of Caro opened to the public this year as the swish five-star Caro Hotel, which incorporates historical elements — including the remains of a 12th century wall that once surrounded the city — with ultra-modern elements. This boutique hotel offers 36 individually appointed rooms, and serves up contemporary (and reasonably priced) Mediterranean fare in its Alma del Temple restaurant.

VAWN HIMMELSBACH IS A FREELANCE WRITER BASED IN TORONTO. CHECK OUT HER WEBSITE AT CHICSAVVYTRAVELS.COM.

Getting there

- **Fly into Manises Airport.** Located eight kilometres from the city centre, the airport is connected to 19 other Spanish cities, as well as 34 European and two intercontinental cities.
- **The new AVE high-speed train.** It covers the 391 km between Valencia and Madrid in an hour and a half. There are about 15 high-speed trains per day, from 32 euros.

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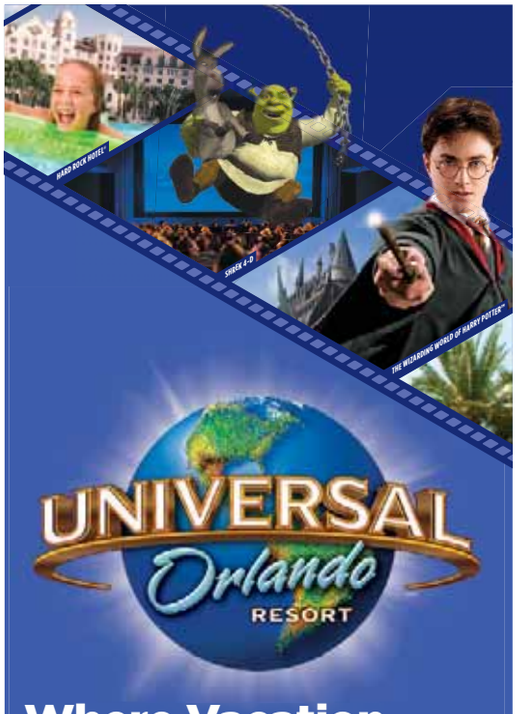

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Roasted Eggplant and Pepper Dip with Black 'Bugs'

This recipe yields about 3-1/2 cups (875 ml) of dip. DAIRYGOODNESS.CA

Gruesomely delicious dip with black bugs for tombstone nibbling

Roasted eggplant and pepper dip with black "bugs" is a gruesomely delicious dip that can be topped off with "tombstone" toast slices. This baba-ganoush-inspired recipe also reaches new levels of darkness with rich pomegranate molasses, balanced by heady garlic, cumin, coriander and bell pepper.

Garnished by insect-specks of black sesame or poppy seeds, it will have your guests crawling with excitement inspired from beyond the chip bowl.

And the smoky, flavourful dip, isn't just for Halloween time.

It will also fill your home with aromas from the Middle East to impress your guests during any dinner party or the next big football game.

1. Preheat oven to 400 F (200 C).

2. Place eggplant directly on oven rack. Place whole pepper, onion and garlic cloves in a small roasting pan and toss olive oil. Roast vegetables for 45 minutes, tossing every 15 minutes, until vegetables are charred and eggplant is deflated (remove garlic and onions as they are roasted; they will be ready before pepper). Remove eggplant from oven with tongs, place in roasting pan with other vegetables, and allow to cool.

3. While vegetables are cooling, in a small, dry skillet, combine cumin, coriander and 1 tsp (5 ml) of nigella seeds. Cook over medium heat, shaking pan often for 2 minutes until fragrant and seeds begin to pop. Transfer to mortar and pestle (alternatively use spice grinder or place in a bowl and crush with the back of spoon) and grind until seeds are crushed, but not perfectly smooth.

4. When vegetables are cool enough to handle, cut eggplant and scoop out flesh onto a cutting board. Peel, core and de-seed pepper and place flesh on board with onion and garlic cloves. Roughly chop everything together and scoop into a serving bowl.

5. Stir in toasted seeds, salt, lemon juice, yogurt and pomegranate molasses. Serve immediately or cover and refrigerate for up to 2 days. Top with remaining nigella seeds arranging as bugs.

DAIRYGOODNESS.CA

Ingredients

- 1 large eggplant (1-1/2 lbs/750 g), pricked all over with a fork
- 1 sweet orange pepper
- 1 onion, quartered
- 4 large cloves garlic
- 2 tbsp (30 ml) olive oil
- 1-1/2 tsp (7 ml) cumin seeds,
- 1-1/2 tsp (7 ml) coriander seeds
- 1-1/2 tsp (7 ml) nigella, black sesame or poppy seeds, divided
- 1-1/2 tsp (7 ml) salt
- 2 tbsp (30 ml) freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 1 cup (250 ml) thick plain yogurt (Greek)
- 1-1/2 tsp (7 ml) pomegranate molasses
- Flatbread, toasted pita or sliced naan to serve

Drink of the Week

Dark and Gloomy Blueberry Smoothie

This gloomy-coloured smoothie, perfect for a spooky Halloween breakfast, is packed with blueberries, bananas, milk and a handful of spinach. Halloween, after all, is all about disguises!

- 1-1/2 cups (375 ml) milk
- 1-1/2 cups (375 ml) loosely packed fresh baby spinach
- 1 cup (250 ml) frozen blueberries
- 1 banana, peeled
- Pinch ground nutmeg
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) pure maple syrup, or to taste

In a blender, combine milk, spinach, blueberries, banana, nutmeg and maple syrup and blend until smooth. Add more maple syrup, if desired. Serve immediately.

DAIRYGOODNESS.CA

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Is your desk reflecting your best?

Look around you. A chaotic cubicle could indicate to co-workers that professionalism isn't your priority

LEAH RUEHLICKE
TalentEgg.ca

If you're going to let your space speak for you, make sure it's dishing out the compliments. ISTOCK

Whether we like it or not, our desks say a lot about us.

If you're entering the workforce for the first time as a student or new grad, it's easy to overlook the small details of your working life and focus solely on fitting in with your new office. Ultimately, your personality, work ethic and professional skills will be what allow you to succeed in your career, but there is a lot to be said for how you handle your personal space. Unnecessary clutter, for example, can cause you to appear disheveled and make your co-workers take you less seriously.

Avoiding these common trends can ensure that if your desk absolutely insists on talking about you, it will only have good things to say.

Itching to leave

It's nice to personalize your space. In fact, doing so creates the idea that you are committed for the long haul, which an employer will look highly upon.

That being said, the 800 photos of your Jamaican cruise and countdown calendar to your next vacation don't reflect well.

They suggest that you'd rather be anywhere but here.

Tip: Limit the number of photos you post so you don't appear eager to run out the door.

No man's land

On the other end of the spectrum, your desk shouldn't be so empty that people forget someone actually sits there. Too many photos and memorabilia items send a negative message, but a complete lack of them sends a different yet equally off-putting thought. People might think you're reluctant to settle down with the company.

Tip: Nobody needs to know about your ongoing Pokemon obsession, but a family photo or two makes it seem like a human being actually works there.

Snacks and Starbucks

Depending on your work environment, eating at your desk may be common practice. However, if you're one of those people who likes to eat little portions throughout the day, make sure you don't let empty containers and wrappers pile up. This makes you appear messy and distracted (and as though you have nothing better to do than continually go for coffee breaks).

Tip: Use a reusable coffee mug to cut down on the number of Starbucks cups piling up by your monitor.

Post-it note central

If a slight breeze could potentially tear your organization apart, it's time to change your strategy. Writing a quick note to yourself might make you feel on top of things, but an abundance of them makes you appear disorganized to others.

Tip: A notebook (or better yet, an online calendar which can notify you before you're supposed to do something) is a much more efficient way to stay organized.

Taking festive too far?

Every day is a holiday

- Halloween brings forth tiny carved pumpkins. Christmas finds your desk completely strung with lights, and Easter features a giant pile of decorated eggs. Although festive, this indicates you have nothing better to do at work, making your boss question both your priorities and commitment to your job.
- Tip: Bring in Halloween treats and hang up a stocking. End of story.

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Student voice

Sporting a sensational CV

Stephanie Wetmore
Graduate
Master's in Sports Industry Management
Georgetown University

Graduate
Bachelor of Arts in Sociology
UCLA
TalentEgg.ca

I am a 24-year-old athlete with three major transitions that have led me to where I am today. My first transition was from high school to university. At 17 years old, I was nearing the end of my high school career and started to consider my options for the future. As an accomplished tennis player, I had a few choices for my next step, which included pro tennis, university in Canada or a tennis scholarship in the United States. I was on the fence because I thought I could be successful on the pro tour, but at the same time university seemed like the logical option. I ended up accepting a full tennis scholarship at UCLA. I chose school over the pros and it was one of the best decisions I've made.

The second transition was from undergraduate to graduate school when I entered Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. for sports management. Grad school helped me step out of my comfort zone and apply the material I was being taught in the workforce. After finishing grad school, I'm now experiencing my third (and most difficult) transition. My path of education is complete, and I'm now setting out to create a new one in the communications field.

What I'm doing now

During my graduate program, I started working as an assistant tennis coach at Georgetown, which was a change from being an athlete.

I'm now working part-time as an assistant tennis coach at Georgetown and part-time as a communications intern at Lagardere, a public relations company in Washington, D.C.

Another hurdle I've had to overcome in my transition to the "real world" has been securing employment in the U.S. Canadian students who attend school in the U.S. are eligible for up to 12 months of employment.

After that, you need to find a company that will sponsor you for a work visa.

I'm currently in my 12-month period after school, and who knows if I'll find a company to sponsor me, but I'm trying to gain as much experience as I can.

My recommendations for employers, career centres or schools

Look at the entire person as opposed to the GPA, work experience or resumé.

My undergraduate GPA was not as impressive, but my other attributes I developed during my athletic scholarship made me invaluable as a potential hire.

Playing varsity tennis taught me leadership skills, time management and teamwork.

Employers and schools need to look at the whole package.

Sometimes the most important aspects cannot be expressed on paper.

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Bring order to the office

Time to shine. Get a grip on every hour of your working day

LEAH RUEHLICKE
TalentEgg.ca

You crawl into work. Settle into your chair. Turn to your co-worker, ask how their evening was and get their take on the latest Perez release. Now that you're caught up, you casually look out the window and wonder what you'll make for dinner that evening. All that thinking about food reminds you that you haven't yet had your morning coffee. Off you saunter, leaving your piles of work until the last minutes of the day, at which point you pound on that keyboard like it owes you money to get your reports in on time as you wonder where the day went.

If this sounds like your typical work day, it's time for a time management makeover.

To make the transition from caffeine-fuelled work rampage to the cool and collected colleague you know you can be, here are some tips for time management in the office.

Learning to manage your time and workload in the office can help you avoid those very stressful ups and downs. ISTOCK

Pull yourself together, man
Chances are you don't have a handy-dandy secretary sitting outside your cubicle ready to get your life in order. It's up to you. First step to time management is figuring out how much time you have to manage. Get a calendar, an agenda, an online organizer or whatever tools you need to break down your day into a logical schedule. Add dates, goals and deadlines to your schedule so you can visually see your work in terms of time and organize yourself accordingly.

Make lists, not excuses
To-do lists aren't just for soccer moms anymore. Trying to keep track of everything in your brain is a heavy task, but putting pen to paper ensures that those tasks won't be forgotten. Writing down the things you have to do will help organize your projects so you can start getting things done. Be realistic when writing lists of your projects and try separating your items by what you need to do that day and what is not really time sensitive. Having a daily to-do list will help organize your time and give you a sense of what needs to be done when, ensuring your tasks don't accumulate to an impossibly busy Friday afternoon.

Go after the big fish first
You may pride yourself on writing emails in perfect iambic pentameter, but if you are spending all day penning a few short messages, it's time to re-think your priorities. With your time organized and your lists written, separate the tasks that need to get done now from those that can wait until you have a spare moment. Prioritize the major projects over things that are less time sensitive.

Don't be an enabler
If Facebook, G-chat, and Twitter commandeer most of your time at work, don't even give them the option of coming aboard your work schedule. Instead of having Facebook or your personal email account open in the background, leave your distractions for your break and close them down when you get back to work.

ISHANI NATH, TALENTEGG.CA

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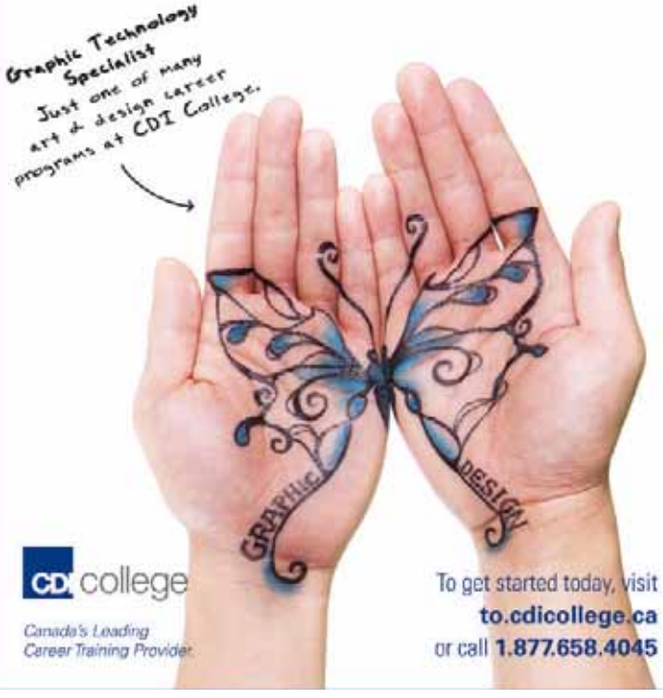

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CFL

Argos to rest Ray in final game before playoffs

The Toronto Argonauts' reward to Ricky Ray for being named the CFL's offensive player of the week is time off.

Ray received the CFL's weekly honour Tuesday after throwing four TD passes in a 31-26 road win over Saskatchewan on Saturday.

With a playoff spot sewn up, Ray will watch the Argos' regular-season finale Thursday night against the arch-rival Hamilton Tiger-Cats.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Argos quarterback Ricky Ray.
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE

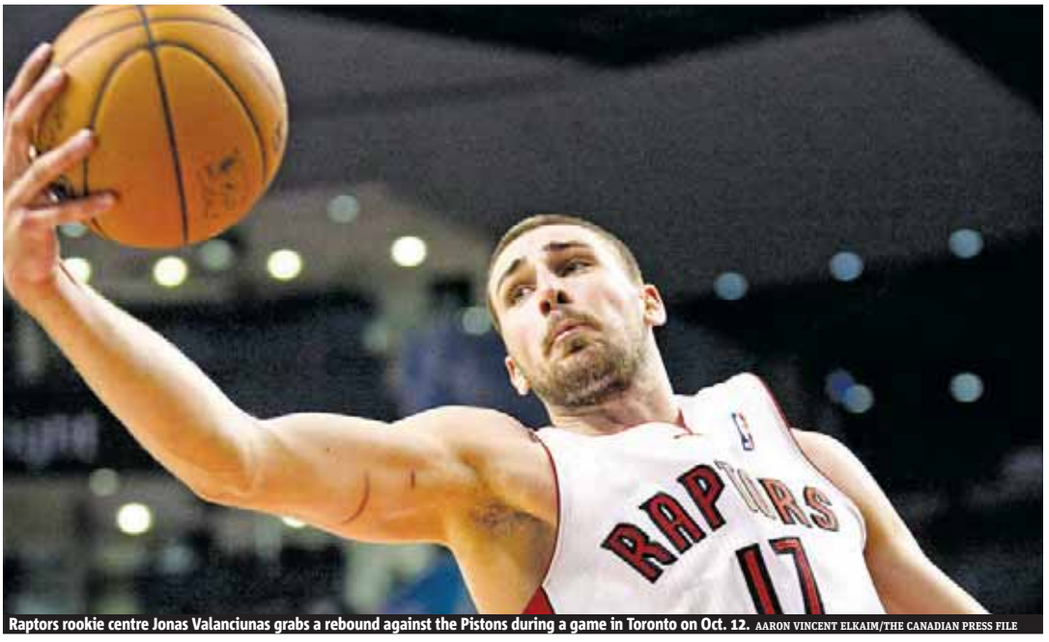
MLB

Romero's rough season ends with elbow surgery

As Ricky Romero struggled through his disastrous 2012 season, it was often speculated he must have been hurt. Now we know he was.

The Blue Jays' 27-year-old left-hander had arthroscopic surgery two weeks ago to "clean up" scar tissue that had built up in his left elbow, he and the club announced Tuesday.

Romero admitted he pitched through soreness on the outside of his elbow through most of the season, but said he wasn't sure if it caused his poor performance. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



Raptors rookie centre Jonas Valanciunas grabs a rebound against the Pistons during a game in Toronto on Oct. 12. AARON VINCENT ELKAIM/THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

Raps' Valanciunas not sweating NBA debut

NBA. Big Lithuanian rookie 'not feeling big pressure' ahead of clash with Pacers

Quoted

"The fans of Toronto will love him just because he hits first and asks questions later. Maybe too much so."

Raptors head coach Dwane Casey on Jonas Valanciunas

Jonas Valanciunas couldn't have envisioned such an NBA debut when he was drafted nearly a year and a half ago.

Not only will he start in the Raptors' season opener Wednesday, matching up against an NBA all-star, the Lithuanian centre is being touted as the future of the franchise for a team aching to get back to the playoffs for the first time in five years.

That's a lot sitting on the shoulders of a 20-year-old — but Valanciunas sounds up to the task.

"I'm not feeling big pressure," he said in his thick Lithuanian accent. "I feel small pressure because we need to win, because everybody is expecting us to win now because no hockey, everybody is going to be concentrating on basketball.

"But it's just basketball. You have to step on the court and do your things. If you're going to think about pressure, or what the guys (are) talking about you, it's not going to be good."

Valanciunas will battle 2012 all-star Roy Hibbert when the Raptors host the Indiana Pacers in their season opener on Wednesday. The Toronto rookie will make his long-awaited debut after the Raptors selected him fifth overall in the 2011 draft but left him in Lithuania for another season of development.

Raptors coach Dwane Casey admitted he's nervous for his young player.

"I want Jonas to do well, I want him to perform well, and he's going against an experienced guy who knows all the tricks," Casey said after Tuesday's practice at the Air Canada Centre. "It's experience against inexperience, but this is the only way this young man is going to learn. Throw him out there in the fire, let him make his mistakes, and learn from them."

Valanciunas is one of three new starters for Toronto — the others are Kyle Lowry and Landry Fields. Valanciunas earned his spot with strong play in the pre-season, making five starts and averaging 8.3 points and 6.8 rebounds.

"I was not expecting to be the coach's starting centre, I expected just 10 minutes, and he's giving me a lot, so I feel really great," Valanciunas said. "I feel support from the coach, from the players, it's amazing.

"I think this is the best spot for me to play basketball."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Raptors ready to start

Toronto enters tonight's season opener with a new-look starting five, but coach Dwane Casey has said he won't hesitate to shift underperforming bodies to the bench. Here's a look at what each starter must do to ensure they keep their spots.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Photos by Torstar News Service/The Canadian Press/Getty Images

Kyle Lowry, PG

Needs to bring toughness and three-point shooting to the backcourt; much has been made of his leadership abilities and that's all well and good, but he has to play well for it to mean anything. Does provide a different look at PG than they've had with his ability to get to the rim.

DeMar DeRozan, SG

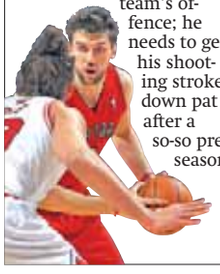
He had a good pre-season and showed a willingness to attack the basket and finish after contact when he gets there, two things the Raptors need from him. Could still be a more effective shooter, has to master three-point range rather than settle for long twos.

Landry Fields, SF

Making some shots would be a good start. After struggling in the pre-season, he has to find his stroke if for no other reason than to keep defences honest. He is one of the brighter players; he's a good-help defender who is seldom out of position.

Andrea Bargnani, PF

Needs to be the Bargnani of the first 20 or so games a year ago, when he was aggressive and effective on defence and still did his fair share of scoring. The enigmatic Roman will be the focal point of the team's offence; he needs to get his shooting stroke down pat after a so-so pre-season.



Jonas Valanciunas, C

Shouldn't try to do too much and absorb all the lessons he can, quickly. He's shown that he's a quick learner — avoiding, for the most part, inevitable foul trouble in the pre-season — but adapting to the speed and toughness of regular-season games is a must. He won't score a lot but defence is a key.

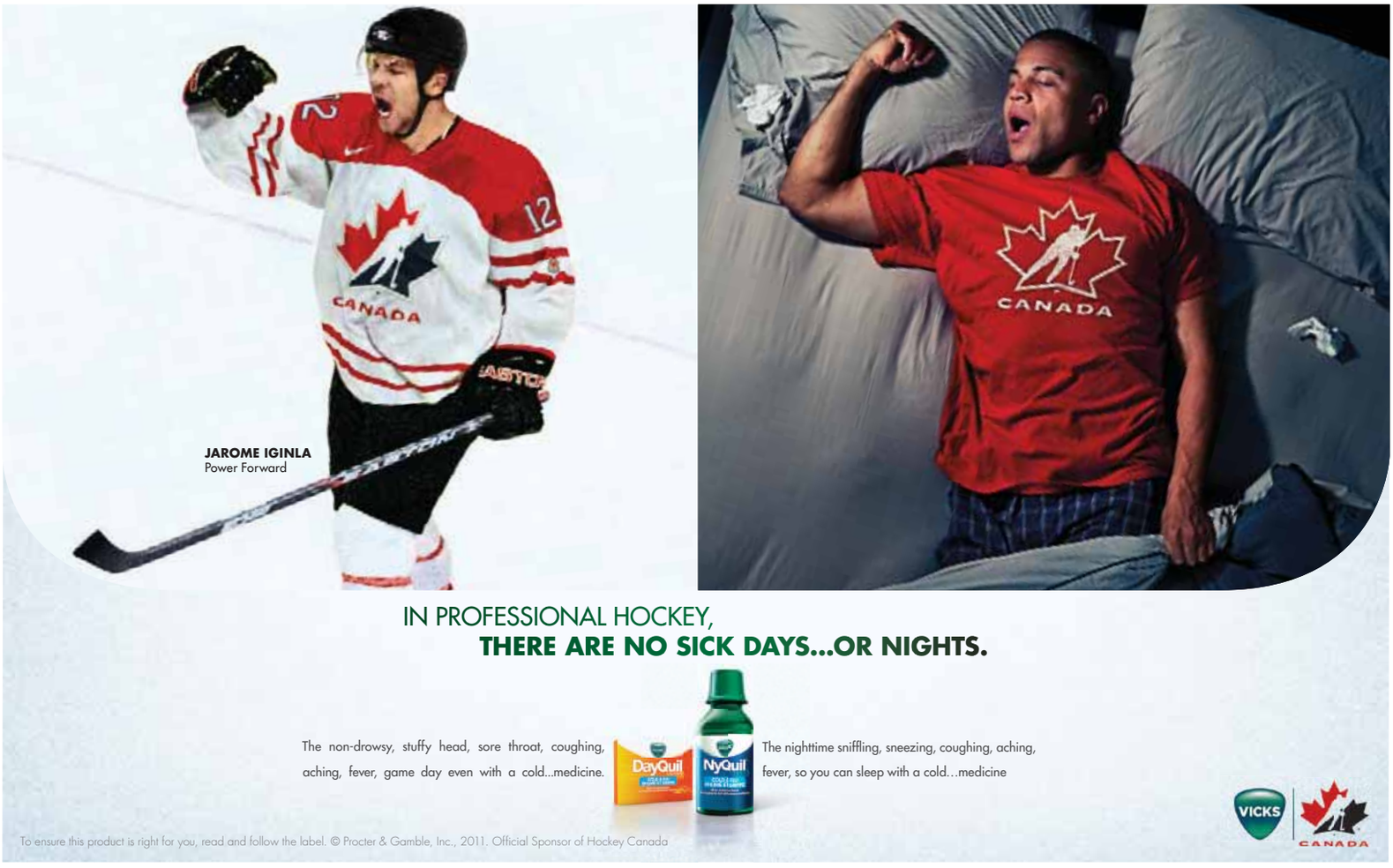
NBA

Pacers heading to Toronto short-handed

The Indiana Pacers will start the season without star forward Danny Granger, who has been sidelined indefinitely with a sore left knee.

The team said Tuesday that their top scorer and former all-star is seeking a second opinion from a doctor as he continues to recover from a knee injury suffered during last spring's Eastern Conference semifinals. It's a tough blow for the Pacers, who had high hopes heading into Wednesday night's season opener in Toronto. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Pacers forward Danny Granger.
GETTY IMAGES FILE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Lockout

Players get escrow before missing another pay period

Locked-out NHL players had the pain of missing their first full pay period offset Tuesday when they received last season's escrow cheque.

Players were returned 7.98 per cent of what they earned last year, plus interest, one day before their second paycheque of the 2012-13 season would have been due, according to a spokesman for the NHL Players' Association

The escrow payments amount to about $80,000 for every million dollars a player earned — before deductions. For example, New York Rangers forward Brad Richards grossed approximately $960,000 after being the league's highest-paid player last season.

Under the terms of the expired collective bargaining agreement, NHL players had a portion of their salaries deducted throughout the season and placed into an escrow account.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Part-time goalie working OT for locked-out players

Hockey. 45-year-old doing his part in keeping pros sharp

The first time real-estate agent and part-time goalie Greg Partchenko walked into a dressing room filled with NHLers, you could hear a puck drop.

"The first day, I walk in and I hear all the guys talking away and it goes silent," says Partchenko. "You can hear the guys thinking, 'Who's this guy?'

"I just said, 'Hi.'"

Big, burly and in his mid-40s, Partchenko put on his equipment, went out on the ice and started what amounts to a part-time hobby as a goalie for NHL stars.

"The next day, Matt Stajan came to me and said, 'When we first looked at you we said, who the heck is this guy? When you got out there it was like, this guy can stop pucks.'"

That was a couple of years ago when Partchenko, 45, got a call from a mutual friend of Matt Nichol, the former Leaf trainer who runs a camp for pros in the summer. Like shinny players everywhere, they needed a goalie.

"(On Friday), we didn't have a goalie. It's not as fun," says Leafs forward Matthew Lombardi. "You need a goalie. It makes it better for us."

Now that the lockout has sidelined NHLers everywhere, Partchenko's regular two-week gig in August has stretched out a couple of months. He's gotten to know the likes of Phil Kessel, Mike Cammalleri and Dion Phaneuf.

"You're thinking, 'Are these guys going to take it easy on me, are they going to go hard? If I feel like I'm having a bad day, do these guys want me to come back? Am I putting up enough competition for them?'" wonders Partchenko. "At the end of the day, they go, 'Yep, you're doing all right.'"

It's been mostly Maple Leafs and Toronto residents like Cammalleri and Tomas Kaberle working out at the local rink — they're not at the Maple Leafs-operated MasterCard Centre anymore.

There's a bit of a rotation among the goalies working out at the Toronto camp. Team Canada women's national goalie Christina Kessler has been coming out lately, as well as some midget-aged goalies.

Andrew Cipollone, 16, of the AAA North York Rangers, was on the ice on Monday — skipping school in the process — for his first day with the pros. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Quoted

"There's 60 in the league and so many are in Europe. There's just not that many around."

Toronto Maple Leaf Phil Kessel on the challenge of finding a goaltender for training sessions

Goalie Greg Partchenko with new Maple Leafs centre Jay McClement during a scrimmage with locked-out NHL players in Toronto on Tuesday.
ANDREW FRANCIS WALLACE/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Leafs' Lupul joins long list of Euro-bound NHLers

Joffrey Lupul has signed a deal with Avtomobilist Yekaterinburg of the Kontinental Hockey League. GETTY IMAGES FILE

The number of unemployed locked-out NHLers would appear to be dwindling.

Maple Leafs winger Joffrey Lupul is among the latest in a wave of NHLers heading to Russia in the wake of stalled collective bargaining talks.

Patrick Kane scored his first goal in the Swiss league Tuesday as almost 20 NHLers have headed across the water since the NHL and NHL Players' Association last exchanged proposals.

Just who is locked out?

The NHLPA boasts about 720 members and the number of players working out in North American arenas trying to keep fit is dwindling.

The skate in Toronto, which had nine players last week, had only five on Tuesday: Matthew Lombardi, Mike Komisarek, Jay McClement, Tomas Kaberle and Daniel Winnick.

Two other regulars at that skate are Phil Kessel and Mike Cammalleri.

Kessel, Cammalleri and Komisarek all told Torstar News Service in the past few days that family commitments mean they will probably not pursue overseas deals.

The Leafs' Clarke MacArthur had been part of the Toronto skate, but has since signed in Germany to play in Division 2. Cody Franson is in Sweden. Lupul joins Mikhail Grabovski and Nikolai Kulemin in Russia.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

By the numbers

191

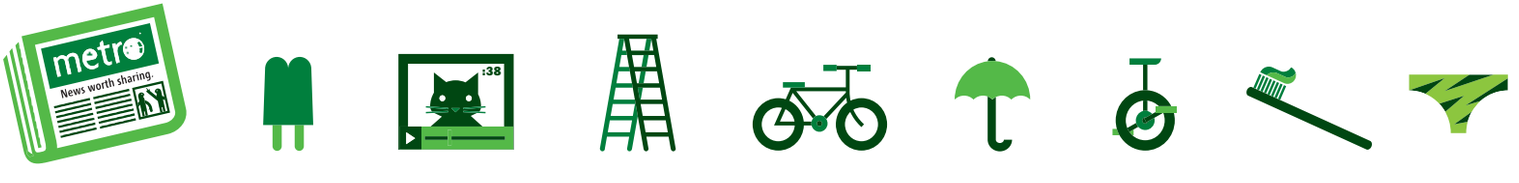
Now, according to the NHLPA, there are 191 NHLers playing in Russia and Europe — including five Maple Leafs.

Staying to give back

Some NHLers who have remained home are pursuing goodwill exhibition games.

- There was a game on the weekend in Chicago in support of Ronald McDonald House.
- Locked-out Winnipeg Jets are planning a fundraiser for a local hospital. Locked-out Senators are considering something similar.

Sharability



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Titanium model shown

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Offer is only valid at participating dealers, is subject to vehicle availability, and may be cancelled or changed at any time without notice. Only one (1) offer may be applied towards the purchase or lease of one (1) Eligible Vehicle, up to a maximum of two (2) separate Eligible Vehicle sales per Costco Membership Number. Offer is transferable to persons domiciled with an eligible Costco member. This offer can be used in conjunction with most retail consumer offers made available by Ford Motor Company of Canada at either the time of factory order (if ordered within the Offer Period) or delivery, but not both. Offer is not combinable with any GPA/GPL or Daily Rental incentives, the Commercial Upfit Program or the Commercial Fleet Incentive Program (CFIP). Applicable taxes calculated before $1,000 OPEN offer is deducted. Dealer may sell or lease for less. Limited time offer, see dealer for details or call the Ford Customer Relationship Centre at 1-800-565-3673. * Receive a winter safety package which includes: four (4) winter tires, four (4) steel rims (2012 Escape receives alloy wheels), and four (4) tire pressure monitoring sensors when you purchase or lease any new 2012/2013 Ford Fiesta, Focus (excluding ST), Escape (excluding FWD 1.6L EcoBoost), Edge (excluding Sport) or Explorer and not before Nov. 30/12. Customers choosing to opt out of the winter safety package will qualify for $750 in customer cash. This offer is not applicable to any Fiesta other than small beetles with an engine code of "J" (1.6L Ti-VCT engine), Focus with an engine code of "M" (2.0L Duratec engine), Escape with an engine code of "1" (2.0L EcoBoost engine) or "2" (1.6L EcoBoost engine), Edge with an engine code of "1" (3.5L Duratec engine) or "2" (2.0L EcoBoost engine), Explorer with an engine code of "1" (3.5L Duratec engine) or "2" (2.0L EcoBoost engine) and Transit Connect. Some restrictions may apply. See dealer for details. * Lease for $198 bi-weekly (approx. $429 monthly) for 48 months with $1,999 down payment. Offer includes $750 Winter Safety Package Cash Alternative. Lease based on a new 2013 Focus SE Sedan (excluding ST) with an MSRP of $21,999. Lease rate is 0% APR. Lease offer includes freight, air tax, PPSA, Stewardship Ontario Environmental Fee but excludes administration and registration fees of up to $799, fuel fill charge of up to $120 and all applicable taxes. Taxes payable on full amount of lease financing price after any price adjustment is deducted. ** Until November 30, 2012, receive 0% APR purchase financing on new 2013 Focus (excluding S, ST and BEV) Ford Fiesta (excluding S) Taurus (excluding SE) Taurus SHO, Edge (excluding SE) Escape (excluding S) Explorer (excluding Base) Flex, Mustang (excluding V6) F-150 (excluding Regular Cab XL) Super Duty, Expedition, Transit Connect and E-Series Cutaway/Chassis Cab. Offer is not combinable with any GPA/GPL or Daily Rental incentives, the Commercial Upfit Program or the Commercial Fleet Incentive Program (CFIP). Applicable taxes calculated before $1,000 OPEN offer is deducted. Dealer may sell or lease for less. Limited time offer, see dealer for details or call the Ford Customer Relationship Centre at 1-800-565-3673. *** Receive a winter safety package which includes: four (4) winter tires, four (4) steel rims (2012 Escape receives alloy wheels), and four (4) tire pressure monitoring sensors when you purchase or lease any new 2012/2013 Ford Fiesta, Focus (excluding ST), Escape (excluding FWD 1.6L EcoBoost), Edge (excluding Sport) or Explorer and not before Nov. 30/12. Customers choosing to opt out of the winter safety package will qualify for $750 in customer cash. This offer is not applicable to any Fiesta other than small beetles with an engine code of "J" (1.6L Ti-VCT engine), Focus with an engine code of "M" (2.0L Duratec engine), Escape with an engine code of "1" (2.0L EcoBoost engine) or "2" (1.6L EcoBoost engine), Edge with an engine code of "1" (3.5L Duratec engine) or "2" (2.0L EcoBoost engine), Explorer with an engine code of "1" (3.5L Duratec engine) or "2" (2.0L EcoBoost engine) and Transit Connect. Some restrictions may apply. See dealer for details. ‡ Lease for $168 bi-weekly (approx. $364 monthly) for 48 months with $1,999 down payment. Offer includes $750 Winter Safety Package Cash Alternative. Lease based on a new 2013 Fiesta SE Hatchback (excluding ST) with an MSRP of $16,999. Lease rate is 0% APR. Lease offer includes freight, air tax, PPSA, Stewardship Ontario Environmental Fee but excludes administration and registration fees of up to $799, fuel fill charge of up to $120 and all applicable taxes. 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Toronto firm Baka Communications' huge grid of solar panels above their new-age filling station is one of the biggest in North America. ALL PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

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Autopilot

AUTO PILOT
Mike Goetz
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Being the centre of our part of the universe, the sun has always maintained a pretty big ego. But we must let that slide, because it's always been quite generous about sharing its energy.

Flora and fauna have long ago figured out how to directly use the sun's energy. Cars, not so much. Solar-powered cars are coming, but they're still science experiments.

There has always been the indirect way — grabbing solar-generated electricity to throw on the grid, and then letting electric cars draw power from that grid.

It's a strategy that is gaining more and more traction these days, due to clean energy issues and the subsequent and rising popularity of the modern electrical-driven automobile.

A big case in point is the structure that suddenly appeared last week on the premises of Baka Communications. The Toronto-firm is billing it as the largest solar charging station in Canada that is not run by a government or utility-company entity. It's also among the largest in North America.

"We also have the largest private fleet of Chevrolet Volts in Canada," says Baka's president, John Marion. At the station's ribbon-cutting ceremony on Oct. 23, eight of the Volts were simultaneously charged, showing off the eight available charging stations, positioned under the carport's massive 20-kilowatt solar-panel roof.

Marion initiated the project after installing some solar panels at his house. It got him thinking about what he could do in the same green vein at the office.

"Next year, we're scheduled to do our rooftop project, an 80-kilowatt system," adds Marion. "When you combine them, they'll be able to provide 50 per cent of our total electrical needs at this location, including the full charging of all nine cars for 20-kilowatt-per-year driving."

The electric fleet and the two big solar panels will set the company back about $1 million dollars. Marion obviously feels the investment is justified.

"At the end of the day, I want to promote green … When we're bidding for work, clients want to know how green you are. We do a lot of green things, like recycling and conservation. Those are the norms. But nobody can come close to what we're doing. At the same time, it's got to be in you. It's in me."

It's in Marion so much he wants to make Baka an "evangelist for the environmental movement." In this regard, Baka is blessed by its location adjacent to the much-travelled 427 Highway — about 275,000 vehicles a day will pass by the firm's electric carport.

"We hope a lot of people will see it, to ultimately create discussion and awareness that solar powered charging stations are actually here. We also hope that Saas' phone rings off the hook, because we should have more of these."

The Saas in question is Saas Perez of Renewz Sustainable Solutions, which built and created Baka's system. Perez says the station is the first in North America to be based on a combination of Italian structural technology and North American electrical technology.

The company will be introducing a home version in 2013. Also unique will be the ability to reserve a charging station via a mobile device, but only when Baka is ready to give public access to these charging stations.

How will Baka charge public users for charging? Marion said they wouldn't have to pay. Why no payment I can't help but ask…

"Because it's free," says Marion, pointing to the sky.

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Keep your top clean

A convertible is an especially cool set of wheels, but a dirty or discoloured top can really mess up the image. Keep your lid clean with RaggTop convertible top cleaner and vinyl top protector from Wolfsteins Pro Series products. The company's Fabric Convertible Care Kit includes one bottle of cleaner plus one bottle of protectant that can be used on vinyl as well as fabric tops and plastic convertible rear windows. The kit usually sells in the $30 range and is available through a number of online resellers. You can scope out the full list as well as other Wolfsteins' cleaning products at wolfsteins.com.

Toolbox on your key chain

It's always a smart idea to keep a few tools handy in case of an emergency, but should you really store them dangling from the end of a key chain? That's exactly where you'll find them when you own the BodyGard seven-in-one mini-feature tool from swisstools.com. This device comes with a seatbelt cutter, glass breaker, flashlight, high-decibel warning alert, emergency flasher, thermometer and tire-pressure gauge. The product is actually small and light enough to dangle from your key chain (you just give it a sharp tug to release), so you'll always know where to find it if, or when, you need it. Pick one up for $40 from any Brookstone, L.L. Bean or Radio Shack store, as well as by shopping amazon.com.

Garage cleanliness sorted

Keeping your garage floor clean of debris seems like a constant battle. Why not make the job easier with the Eye-Vac automatic vacuum. The electric powered 13-inch-by-7.5-inch canister with its 1,400-watt motor can be placed in any out-of-the-way spot. All you do is sweep the dirt and debris over to the vacuum and a sensor on the unit automatically activates the suction motor. The bagless trash containment area includes a cleanable HEPA filter designed to keep dust to a minimum. The Eye-Vac is priced at $100 from smarthome.com.

Assistance for changing a flat

Having to deal with changing a flat tire isn't much fun, regardless of where or when it occurs. But you can make the chore somewhat easier with the Roadside Automatic Jack from Automotive Specialty Tools. Once the jack has been positioned beneath one of your vehicle's lift points (check your owner's manual), you simply plug the seven-foot electrical cord into the cigarette lighter socket (or similar power source) and activate the control button. In seconds the jack's motor will have the flat tire in the air, making it ready for removal and installation of the spare. Order yours for $70 from etoolcart.com.

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For the latest information, visit us at chevrolet.ca, drop by your local Chevrolet Dealer or call us at 1-800-GM-DRIVE. *Offer applies to the purchase of 2012 Chevrolet (Cruze LS R7A/Sonic Sedan LS R7A/Orlando LT R7A). ♦$4,500/$3,500/$11,500 is a manufacturer to dealer delivery credit (tax exclusive) for 2012 Chevrolet (Orlando/Equinox/Silverado 1500 Crew Cab) and is reflected in offers in this advertisement. Other cash credits available on most models. See dealer for details. ♦♦$1,500/$1,500 is a manufacturer to dealer delivery credit (tax exclusive) for 2012 Chevrolet (Cruze/Sonic) and is reflected in cash purchase offers in this advertisement. Such credit is available only for cash purchase and by selecting lease or finance offers; consumers are foregoing such credit which will result in higher effective interest rates. Other cash credits available on most models. See dealer for details. ‡0% for 84 months (2,100 weekly payments) on approved credit. Monthly payment is $5.95 per $1,000 of amount financed. Example: $20,000 at 0% for 84 months (2,100 weekly payments) is $119.00 per month/$27.46 per week. Cost of borrowing is $0. Freight & PDI ($1,495/$1,495/$1,495/$1,495/$1,495) and applicable taxes and PPSA, dealer fees and OMVIC fee are extra. Insurance, cable TV and other options are available at extra cost. Dealer may sell for less. Offer ends January 2, 2013. ‡‡0% for 84 months (2,100 weekly payments) on approved credit. Monthly payment is $5.95 per $1,000 of amount financed. Example: $20,000 at 0% for 84 months (2,100 weekly payments) is $119.00 per month/$27.46 per week. Cost of borrowing is $0. Freight & PDI ($1,495/$1,495/$1,495/$1,495/$1,495) and applicable taxes and PPSA, dealer fees and OMVIC fee are extra. Insurance, cable TV and other options are available at extra cost. Dealer may sell for less. Offer ends January 2, 2013. Incentive ranges from $1,000-$11,023 on 2012 Chevrolet (with exception of Corvette) with very deep discounts on 2012 Cruze Eco, Sonic LS, Aveo LS and Orlando 1LT. Down payment and cost of borrowing may affect net cost of vehicle. Dealer may sell for less or lease for more. Offer ends January 2, 2013. ♦♦♦Freight & PDI ($1,495/$1,495/$1,495/$1,495/$1,495) and applicable taxes and PPSA, dealer fees and OMVIC fee are extra. Insurance, cable TV and other options are available at extra cost. Dealer may sell for less. Offer ends January 2, 2013. +Based on WardsAuto.com 2012 Upper Small segment, excluding Hybrid and Diesel powertrains. Standard 10 airbags, ABS, traction control and StabiliTrak®. ®Bluetooth is a registered trademark of Bluetooth SIG Inc. †2012 Sonic Sedan LTZ, MSRP with freight, PDI & levies $22,134. 2012 Orlando LTZ, MSRP with freight, PDI & levies $30,134. Dealers are free to set individual prices. †To qualify for GMCL's Cash for Clunkers incentive, you must: (1) turn in a 2006 or older MY vehicle that is in running condition and has been registered and properly insured in your name for the last 3 months (2) turn in a 2006 or older MY vehicle that is in running condition and has been registered under a small business name for the last 3 months. GMCL will provide eligible consumers with a manufacturer to consumer incentive (tax inclusive) to be used towards the purchase/finance/lease of a new eligible 2012 or 2013 MY Chevrolet Colorado, GMC Canyon, Chevrolet Silverado, GMC Sierra, or Chevrolet Avalanche delivered between October 2, 2012 and January 2, 2013. Incentive ranges from $1500 to $3,000, depending on model purchased. Incentive may not be combined with certain other offers. By participating in the Cash For Clunkers program you will not be eligible for any trade-in value for your vehicle. See your participating GM dealer for additional program conditions and details. GMCL may modify, extend or terminate program in whole or in part at any time without notice. Conditions and limitations apply. See dealer for details. ***Factory order or dealer trade may be required. ©The Best Buy Seal is a registered trademark of Consumers Digest Communications, LLC, used under license. +Based on WardsAuto.com 2012 Upper Small segment, excluding Hybrid and Diesel powertrains. Standard 10 airbags, ABS, traction control and StabiliTrak®. ®Bluetooth is a registered trademark of Bluetooth SIG Inc. †2012 Sonic Sedan LTZ, MSRP with freight, PDI & levies $22,134. 2012 Orlando LTZ, MSRP with freight, PDI & levies $30,134. 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See your participating GM dealer for additional program conditions and details. GMCL may modify, extend or terminate program in whole or in part at any time without notice.

If you were sold on the Civic, you will love the more upscale Acura

Second Gear.
2001 to 2005 Acura EL

PHOTO: WHEELBASE MEDIA

The Acura EL was a luxury-enhanced version of the Honda Civic, and a popular and well-received model that delivered premium luxury in an affordable, cheap-to-run package. Heated leather, a sunroof, remote access, full power accessories, wood trim, and automatic climate control were all on board. Touring and Premium models were available, depending on the year. Shoppers impressed with the Honda Civic's reliability but looking for something more well-equipped and upscale should be impressed.

Common Issues

Check your used EL candidate for proper operation of the trunk and fuel-filler releases, seat adjustments, climate control system and remote keyless entry system. Be sure the speedometer works properly, too.
Check the engine coolant level, ensuring the coolant is full and fresh—not low and dirty. Some owners have reported overheating and climate control problems, which could result from low coolant levels. Avoid any models that exhibit signs of engine oil in the coolant system, which could indicate a bad head gasket.

Though not incredibly widespread, it seems that earlier EL models may have automatic transmissions that suffer from questionable reliability. Opt for a used model with the five-speed stick where possible, which will prove more fun to drive.

Engine

Look for a 1.7 litre four-cylinder engine with 127 horsepower, a five-speed manual or four-speed automatic and front-wheel drive.

What owners like

Driving dynamics, luxury and maneuverability are the EL's most highly-rated assets. Adequate performance and a smooth engine are also noted.

What owners dislike

Some EL owners wish for a quieter ride, more power and better fuel economy in some situations.

Verdict

A used EL with the manual transmission should prove the most reliable model, though a well-maintained model that's had its service schedule adhered to can be bought with confidence.

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School safety is everyone's concern

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Schools should play their part and create designated drop-off zones

JIL MCINTOSH
drive@metronews.ca

Children go to school to learn, but sometimes their parents could use some lessons as well.

According to a recent survey, some 80 per cent of parents have witnessed drivers breaking the law in school zones, including speeding, texting while driving, not stopping at crosswalks, or not stopping for crossing guards.

"People have the best intentions and they want to do what's best for the children, but they have busy lives and they get distracted," says Gail Robertson, road safety ambassador for InsuranceHunter.ca.

"It's a matter of getting people to stop and think about their irresponsible behaviour behind the wheel."

The survey, which was conducted in Ontario and Alberta, uncovered more disturbing statistics.

Some 29 per cent of parents were afraid their children would be hurt being picked up or dropped off, and 21 per cent said they had to stop or swerve to avoid hitting a student who was walking on or near school property.

While driving behaviour is a major issue, Robertson says that schools need to play a part in safety as well.

"One-quarter of people indicated that their school doesn't have a designated drop-off or pickup zone," she says. "The next step will be for parents to talk to their schools and open that dialogue, or to the school board."

Of those parents surveyed, 43 per cent said that the drop-off zones at their children's schools were overcrowded, and only 34 per cent described the zones as safe.

Robertson also suggests that, when possible, it may be safest for children to walk to school. Almost half of the children in the survey who are driven to school live less than one kilometre away. Carpooling, if possible, can also help to reduce the number of vehicles at the school.

"The idea is to have as few cars as possible at the school," Robertson says.

"We're realistic that there will never be no cars, but if you're going to drive, make sure you obey traffic laws and don't put your children in a tough spot where there's a corner or a red light and you say, 'Jump out now.'

"You have to focus on the task on hand, which is getting your child safely to school."

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Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
Someone is lying to you. Someone believes you are easy to fool. It's not true, is it? The planets indicate you need to keep your wits about you today. If you are careless, it could cost you more than just money.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
Do you deal with a problem in a purely logical manner or do you allow your instincts to guide you? The best way is to combine the two, to find a happy medium. Use both sides of your brain today.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
You will hear something today you don't want to know about, but you can't escape the facts. Like it or not, changes have to be made. The only question is: Will you make them or will you leave it to others?

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
You think too much. The more you dwell on a problem today, the more of a problem it will become. Divert your mind in a more positive direction and, who knows, maybe the problem will resolve itself.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
Try something different today, something you would not usually dare to attempt. Yes, it may go wrong but, more likely, it will go right and you will impress a lot of people. You may even impress yourself.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
You will come under pressure from someone who thinks they have the right to tell you what to do. They don't, and the sooner you let them know that the sooner you will be rid of their annoying presence.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
You like to take your time when making a decision but that luxury is not available to you at the moment. Listen to what your inner voice tells you and act on it immediately. That means today, not tomorrow!

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Don't waste your time and energy on things of no importance. If you allow yourself to be sidetracked, it could take quite a while before you are able to get back on course. Focus only on what is important to you.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Stand up for yourself. Refuse to do anything that does not feel right. Others will try to convince you that they know best but if your instincts tell you otherwise, you would be a fool not to listen.

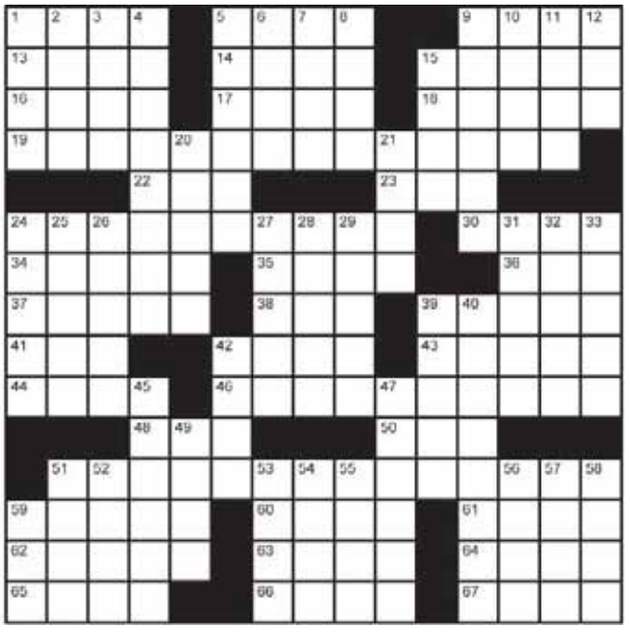
♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Life is too short to waste time wondering if other people approve of your actions. For too long, you have hesitated because you were not sure you were doing the right thing. Ultimately, there is no right thing. Just act.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
A friend or work colleague will try to drag you into a dispute that really has nothing to do with you and if you are smart, you will refuse to get involved. You are not your brother's keeper, nor anyone else's.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
You know what you want and you know where to get it but certain people don't want you to have it. Can they stop you? Only if you let them — so don't let them. **SALLY BROMPTON**

Cities

BY MICHAEL WIESENBERG



Across

1. _: ___.: state west of Minnesota (2 wds.)
5. Chilled, as tea
9. Big smile
13. Trumpet or bugle
14. Connecting point
15. Angered
16. "Moi aussi" (2 wds. minus one O)
17. "Sad to say..."
18. Fortune teller's deck
19. BC city on north bank of the Fraser, in same metro area as 51-Across (2 wds.)
22. Copy
23. "Yessir"
24. Canada's largest province's capital (2 wds.)
30. MDs
34. Store event (2 wds)
35. Big fusses
36. Doubled, a dance
37. Heads: Fr.
38. Life story, for short
39. Internal-combustion engine
41. "Raggedy" doll
42. Wipe (up)
43. Go out with ___: end noticeably (2 wds.)
44. Aussie hoppers, familiarly
46. Largest southern Alberta city
48. Can. neighbor
50. Perform
51. Suburb of BC's largest city, directly across Burrard Inlet from that city, and part of its metro area (2 wds.)
59. "Tell ___ I Love Her": 1960 teenage tragedy hit
60. *Return of the Jedi* forest dweller
61. Je t'___: "I love you" (Fr.)
62. Aquatic mammal
63. *Scream* star Campbell
64. Mounties, briefly
65. Like a busybody
66. Pre-1917 Russian leader
67. "For" votes

Down

1. Ankle-to-knee bone
2. Be overly fond
3. "Pretty maids in ___" (2 wds.)
4. Can be understood
5. "Right away!" (3 wds.)
6. Equine youngster
7. Red-wrapped cheese
8. ___ Arnaz: Lucille Ball's husband
9. Prepared parmesan
10. Hard-to-find
11. "Do ___ else!": parent's threat (2 wds.)
12. Aerialist's "insurance"
15. Teeny
20. Fencing swords
21. Negative votes
24. Abu Dhabi neighbour whose capital is Doha
25. "We ___ MSG": restaurant claim (2 wds.)
26. "Jack Sprat could ___ fat ..." (2 wds.)
27. Broadcast alternative
28. Numskull
29. Canine or bicuspid
31. Eightsome
32. Cheech's partner
33. Beetle Bailey's nemesis
39. Explorer ___ Polo
40. Newspaper item recording a death
42. Yawn-inducing
45. BC's second-largest city, in the same metro area as 51-Across
47. Broadway "angel"
49. Our sun, say
51. Canada joined this mutual defense org. in 1949
52. Ins and ___
53. Air passageway
54. Stuns
55. ___ Scotia
56. "Miami ___" : Don Johnson show or movie based on it
57. Actress Watson of Harry Potter movies
58. Salesmen, for short
59. Horror film star Chaney

Yesterday's Crossword

What's online

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3					8		9	
			3	7			2	
	1		2					7
	6	4		5				
2			8		1			4
				6		9	5	
1					7		3	
	9			4	6			
	2		9					1

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˟ HWY (A/T): 5.5L/100KM
CITY (A/T): 8.0L/100KM

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Forte SX shown△

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˟ HWY (A/T): 6.2L/100KM
CITY (A/T): 9.4L/100KM

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Sportage SX shown△

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KIA
The Power to Surprise

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Representative financing example based on 2013 Sorento LX AT (SR75BD) with a selling price of $29,078 [includes delivery and destination fees of $1,650, $1,650 "3 payments on us" savings, tire recycling and filter charges of $34, OMVIC fee, variable dealer administration fees (up to $399), environmental fee and A/C charge ($100, where applicable)] financed at 0% APR for 60 months, amortized over 84 months. Bi-weekly payments equal $151 per payment with a down payment/equivalent trade of $0. License, insurance, applicable taxes, PPSA and registration fees are extra. Retailer may sell for less. See dealer for full details. ♦"Don't Pay for 90 Days" on select new models (90-day payment deferral) applies to purchase financing offers on select 2012 and 2013 models on approved credit (2012/2013 Sportage/Sorento/Sedona excluded). No interest will accrue during the first 60 days of the finance contract. 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See your dealer for complete details. Offer ends October 31, 2012. ≠Bi-weekly finance payment (on approved credit) for new 2013 Sorento LX AT (SR75BD) based on a selling price of $29,078 is $151 with an APR of 0% for 60 months, amortized over an 84-month period. Estimated remaining principal balance of $7,837 plus applicable taxes due at end of 60-month period. Offer includes $1,650 "3 payments on us" savings, delivery and destination fees of $1,650, tire recycling and filter charges of $34, OMVIC fee, variable dealer administration fees (up to $399), environmental fee and A/C charge ($100, where applicable). License, insurance, applicable taxes, PPSA and registration fees are extra. Retailer may sell for less. See dealer for full details. ◂Cash purchase price for 2013 Forte Sedan LX MT (F0540D) is $13,495 and includes a cash savings of $2,838 (which is deducted from the negotiated selling price before taxes and cannot be combined with special lease and finance offers), $500 dealer cash bonus, $1,050 "3 payments on us" savings, delivery and destination fees of $1,455, tire recycling and filter charges of $34, OMVIC fee, variable dealer administration fees (up to $399), environmental fee and A/C charge ($100, where applicable). License, insurance, applicable taxes, PPSA and registration fees are extra. Based on the Manufacturer Suggested Retail Price of $17,883. Retailer may sell for less. See dealer for full details. Available at participating dealers. †$2,838 cash savings on the cash purchase of an eligible new 2013 Forte Sedan from a participating dealer between October 1 – October 31, 2012. Cash savings is deducted from the negotiated selling price before taxes and cannot be combined with special lease and finance offers. Some conditions apply. See your dealer for complete details. §Lease offer available on approved credit on new 2013 Sportage 2.4L LX MT FWD (SP551D) is based on monthly payments of $236 [includes delivery and destination fees of $1,650, tire recycling and filter charges of $34, OMVIC fee, variable dealer administration fees (up to $399), environmental fee and A/C charge ($100, where applicable), $350 lease service fee and a lease savings (lease credit) of $750] for 48 months at 0.9% with a $1,899 down payment/equivalent trade, PPSA, security deposit and first monthly payment due at lease inception. Total lease obligation is $13,209 with the option to purchase at the end of the term for $11,319. Lease has 16,000 km/year allowance and $0.12/km for excess kilometres (other packages available). License, insurance, applicable taxes and registration fees are extra. Retailer may lease for less. See dealer for full details. △Model shown Manufacturer Suggested Retail Price for 2013 Sorento 3.5L SX AWD 7-seater (SR75XD)/2013 Forte SX Luxury AT (F074XD)/2013 Sportage 2.0T SX with Navigation (SP759D) is $43,045/$27,150/$39,145 and includes delivery and destination fees of $1,650/$1,455/$1,650, environmental fee and A/C charge ($100, where applicable). License, insurance, applicable taxes, variable dealer administration fees (up to $399), tire recycling and filter charges of $34, OMVIC fee, PPSA and registration fees are extra. Retailer may sell for less. See dealer for full details. Available at participating dealers. ˟Highway/city fuel consumption is based on the 2013 Sorento 2.4L GDI 4-cyl (A/T)/2013 Forte Sedan 2.0L MPI 4-cyl (A/T)/2013 Sportage 2.4L MPI 4-cyl (A/T). These estimates are based on Transport Canada's approved criteria and testing methods. Refer to the Government of Canada's *EnerGuide Fuel Consumption Guide*. Your actual fuel consumption will vary based on driving habits and other factors. Some conditions apply to the $500 Grad Rebate Program. See dealer or kia.ca for details. Information in this advertisement is believed to be accurate at the time of printing. For more information on our 5-year warranty coverage, visit kia.ca or call us at 1-877-542-2886. KIA is a trademark of Kia Motors Corporation and Kia Canada Inc. respectively.